FLOWER COMICS
フラワーコミックス

女王の花

Kaneyoshi Izumi presents

和泉かねよし

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幼い頃から共に生きてきた
奴隷の少年・薄星を伴い、
生まれ育った亜国から母の故郷
人質として送られた亜姫
ずっと二輪だと思って、
いつの間にか成長し
そして、亜姫と
生きる術を
今は亡き
明かさ

か訪れる

一巻登場!!

フラワーコミックス

Ai left Ah where she was born and raised. She escaped to her mother's home Kou as a hostage with the young slave boy Hakuseki who has lived with her from an early age.

Hakuseki who thought they would be together forever suddenly finds changes in their growing relationship.

And through Seitetsu the one who taught the two of them literature and strategy they learn more about Ai's deceased mother and her past.

A historical romance about bittersweet love and war here is the 3rd volume of the hit historical manga!

恋も夢もココにある。

ベツコミ

毎月13日ごろ発売!!

ベツコミホームページアドレス

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Cover design／

女王の花
三
和泉かねよし
＊ベツコミ
フラワーコミックス＊

女王の花

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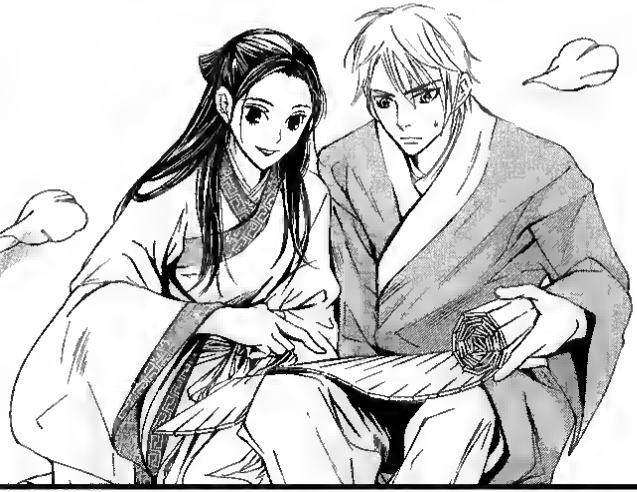


The court lady said:

"Queen-sama, this is 'The Thousand Year Flower.' According to legend, it is the flower of dreams that can grant any wish. So please tell me..."

"What is your true desire?"

女王の花
第五話

I always thought...
...that we'd be together forever.

Squeeze
EH?

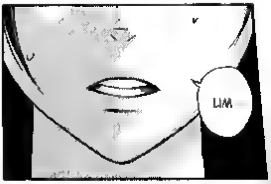
HAKU...
YOU'RE HEAVY!
STOP THAT! GET OFF!
HAKU-SEI!
Has Hakusei always been this big?
Ooh!
UGH.
Badump
Badump
THE PRINCESS IS SO TINY
I FEEL LIKE SHE'LL BE CRUSHED IF I HUG HER
Badump
Badump
HE'S NOT BUDGING AT ALL!!
KICK
KICK

WA-
TURN
WAIT!
GRIP
WAIT!

No!
TWITCH
SLIDE
I SAID NO! STOP IT!
THIS IS DISGUSTING!
BITE
OUCH!

CRASH
SPIN
DON'T GO!
HEY!
IT'S..
HA...
THERE'S A LIMIT TO HEROISM.
HAHAHA. WHAT SHOULD I DO NOW? AFTER HER REACTION...
LIKE SHEDDING SKIN...?

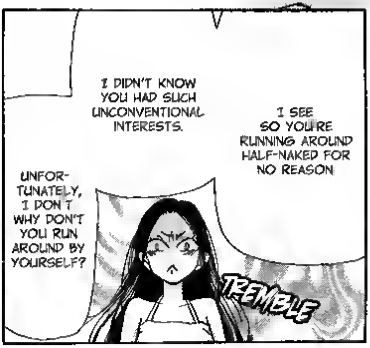
HA...
'THIS IS DISGUSTING!'
CREAK
WHAT IS IT?
KNOCK
KNOCK
KNOCK
KNOCK
KNOCK


UM

UH
UH
UH
WHAT IS IT?
H-I..

huff
huff

H-HOW COULD YOU BE SO COLD-HEARTED, SENTETSU?!
HMPH

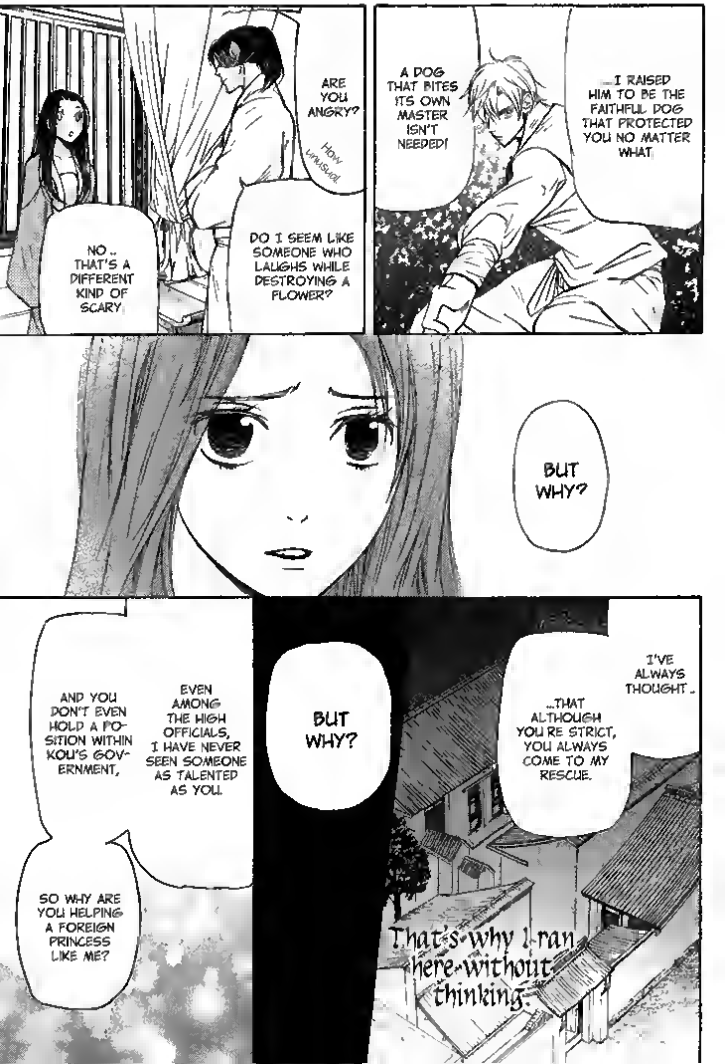

I DIDN'T KNOW YOU HAD SUCH UNCONVENTIONAL INTERESTS.
I SEE SO YOU'RE RUNNING AROUND HALF-NAKED FOR NO REASON
UNFOR-TUNATELY, I DON'T. WHY DON'T YOU RUN AROUND BY YOURSELF?
TREMBLE

Rustle
YOU MUST BE ALL RIGHT IF YOU HAVE THE ENERGY TO ARGUE WITH ME. LET'S GO INSIDE.
Whew

THIS IS MY FIRST TIME IN SEITETSU'S HOUSE...
THERE'S NOTHING HERE
AND YOU'RE NOT GETTING ANY ALCOHOL
I DON'T THINK HE'D LET ANY OTHER MAN DO THAT TO YOU.
EHEE!!
HE DIDN'T TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ME!
WE JUST HAD A SMALL FIGHT!
WHO WAS IT? WAS IT THAT BASTARD HAKUSEI?
Flinch
BUT...
I'M CONFUSED
WE GREW UP TOGETHER, AS EACH OTHER'S CLOSEST CONFIDANT

I've never really thought about...
...the relationship between men and women.
What should I do?
WELL,
CLOSE YOUR EYES...
FOR NOW, AT LEAST
YOU CAN STAY HERE SO YOU CAN PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER

AND SLEEP!
THAT'S WHAT YOU'LL DO!
YOU CAN CHOOSE ANY ROOM YOU LIKE.
THAT'S IT?!
IT WILL BE SOLVED IF YOU PUNISH HAKUSEI.
I TREATED HIM LENIENTLY BECAUSE I THOUGHT HE WAS JUST A KID, BUT IT LOOKS LIKE HE'S ALREADY THINKING ABOUT SEXUAL RELATIONS—
THE PROBLEM ISN'T WHAT YOU SHOULD DO.

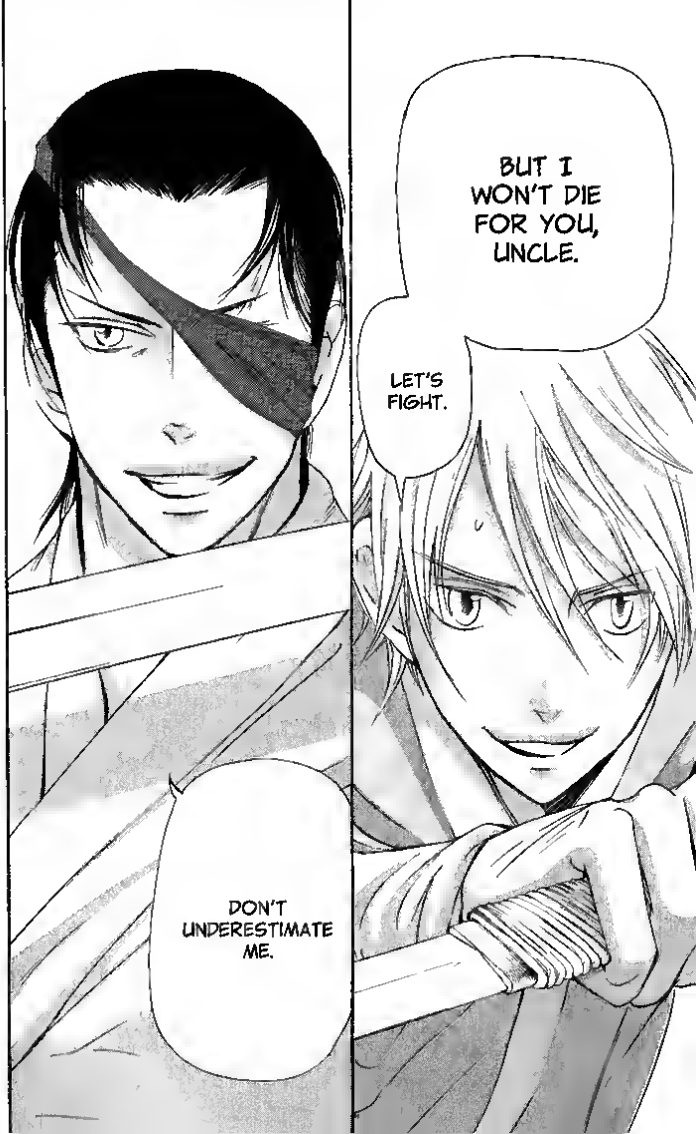

ARE YOU ANGRY?
HOW UNUSUAL
DO I SEEM LIKE SOMEONE WHO LAUGHS WHILE DESTROYING A FLOWER?
NO... THAT'S A DIFFERENT KIND OF SCARY.
A DOG THAT BITES ITS OWN MASTER ISN'T NEEDED!
...I RAISED HIM TO BE THE FAITHFUL DOG THAT PROTECTED YOU NO MATTER WHAT.
BUT WHY?
I'VE ALWAYS THOUGHT...
...THAT ALTHOUGH YOU'RE STRICT, YOU ALWAYS COME TO MY RESCUE.
That's why I ran here without thinking.
BUT WHY?
EVEN AMONG THE HIGH OFFICIALS, I HAVE NEVER SEEN SOMEONE AS TALENTED AS YOU.
AND YOU DON'T EVEN HOLD A POSITION WITHIN KOU'S GOVERNMENT,
SO WHY ARE YOU HELPING A FOREIGN PRINCESS LIKE ME?

WHAT KIND OF A GOD ARE YOU?
RATTLE

I AM TRULY SORRY, PRINCESS
PLEASE COME BACK
WHIZ
KLISEL...
HA-
WAH!
THUNK

CLANG
CLANG
THAT'S DANGEROUS! ARE YOU TRYING TO KILL ME?!
EH--?
YES, I AM.
AFTER TOUCHING THE PRINCESS, YOU MUST HAVE BEEN READY TO DIE.*
DESPITE HOW CLOSE YOU TWO ARE, YOU'RE JUST A SLAVE.
SHINK
I HATE PEOPLE WHO DON'T KNOW THEIR PLACE
*TN: IN BUDDHISM "READY FOR DEATH" MEANS FINDING YOUR WAY AND ACHIEVING ENLIGHTENMENT.
I'M NOT A FOLLOWER OF BUDDHISM, SO I DON'T UNDERSTAND THAT KIND OF THING.
'READY TO DIE'...?

PRINCESS.
Shock
Squeeze
LIFT
IF THE PRINCESS TELLS ME TO DIE, I WILL OBEY THE ORDER.


BUT I WON'T DIE FOR YOU, UNCLE.
LET'S FIGHT.
DON'T UNDERESTIMATE ME.

CRASH
URGENT NEWS...
SEITETSU-SAMA!!
WAIT.... STOP!
...HAS BEEN CAUGHT!
THE SPY THAT INFILTRATED AH'S CAPITAL...
Ah • Capital

WHO EMPLOYED YOU?
WHAT KIND OF PERSON IS THIS MERCHANT SEITETSU...
Ah's First Queen
Queen Do
I AM NOT A SPY...!
I ONLY SPOKE TO THE MERCHANT WHO WANTED TO DO BUSINESS IN THE PALACE A FEW TIMES.
I... I DO NOT KNOW!!
BUT I'VE BEEN IN THE PALACE FOR 8 YEARS IF I'M UNDER SUSPICION NOW, THAT MEANS.
I NEED TO INSIST THAT I KNOW NOTHING
HOW DID YOU CONTACT THEM?
I DO NOT KNOW!!

She must be hiding something that nobody can know about!
If Queen Do is being so vigilant now...
IT'S NO USE CATCHING A LITTLE RAT!
WELL, THAT SEITETSU WOULD HAVE LEFT AH BY NOW
HOW ANNOYING.
P-PLEASE FORGIVE ME. I DO NOT KNOW ANY-THING!
QUEEN DO-SAMA, ?!
I DON'T MIND LETTING YOU GO
I'M SAVED!

BUT,
TOO BAD FOR YOU. I HATE RATS.
LONG AGO, WHEN I CAME HERE FROM DO TO GET MARRIED,
THERE WAS A RAT MOTHER AND DAUGHTER IN THIS PALACE
DESPITE BEING WEAK AND INFERIOR, THEY WOULDN'T EVEN BOW DOWN TO ME.
ALTHOUGH THE GIRL WAS CHASED AWAY TO KOU, I HEAR SHE'S STILL ALIVE.

I WANT TO CRUSH HER...
...WITH ONE STEP!
EEK
PLEASE FORGIVE ME!
PLEASE- AHHHHHH!!!
AKI-SAMA.
MASTER CONFUCIUS SAID THAT HARSH POLITICS IS MORE VICIOUS THAN A TIGER.
Kou Palace
Eastern Room

IT WILL PREPARE YOU FOR THE DAY YOU HAVE TO RULE.
PHILOSOPHY IS IMPORTANT FOR ROYALTY LIKE AKI-SAMA TO STUDY.

AH!
YOU SEEM DISTRACTED DO YOU FIND PHILOSOPHY BORING?
I'M SO SORRY!

Little brats!
DASH
Confucius says blah blah blah...
HOW USEFUL WILL PHILOSOPHY BE UNDER THOSE CIRCUMSTANCES?
STEALING FOOD EVERYDAY. THOSE ARE THE DAYS THAT I WILL RULE.

MAYBE SHE WAS THE SPY THEY WERE TALKING ABOUT LAST NIGHT.

Back in Ah, only one court lady let me get away with stealing food.

He looked so hurt.

I didn't want to return his concern with such coldness...

FIRST, YOU SHOULD PAY ATTENTION WHEN I TEACH.
What should I do...?
Um...
WHO?
There must be
IS THERE ANY WAY I CAN HELP SOMEONE WHO WORKED FOR KOU?
It's something I can do!
IT SEEMS THAT SEITETSU'S SUBORDINATE WAS CAUGHT IN AH.
SHE MIGHT BE SOMEONE I KNOW... IF POSSIBLE, I WANT TO SAVE HER

WHAT?
WHAT'LL HAPPEN IF THAT SPY DISCLOSES HER RELATION TO KOU, SEITETSU?!
AS A CURSE, AH WILL DEMAND SOMETHING OF US!
BESIDES AH, WHAT IF DO ALSO TAKES ADVANTAGE OF IT AND PUSHES ITS WAY IN WITH THE EXCUSE OF AN ALLIANCE
AH IS AN IMMORAL COUNTRY THAT CALMLY THREW AWAY ITS OWN PRINCESS!

SEIITSU! EVEN YOU?!
I BELIEVE IT'D BE BEST TO SAY THAT HE'S SOMEONE WHO HAS NO RELATIONSHIP WITH KOU.

REGARDLESS OF HOW MUCH SEITSTU WORKS FOR KOU, THE FACT'S STILL THAT HE'S NOT A HIGH-RANKING OFFICIAL.
HE'S ONLY A MERCHANT WHO WANDERS FROM COUNTRY TO COUNTRY.
Kou Envoy -Seitsu

For it to turn out like this.
What should I do?

AGAIN, I'M CHEEKILY TRYING TO DEPEND ON HAKUSEI.
I REALLY HAVE NO SHAME

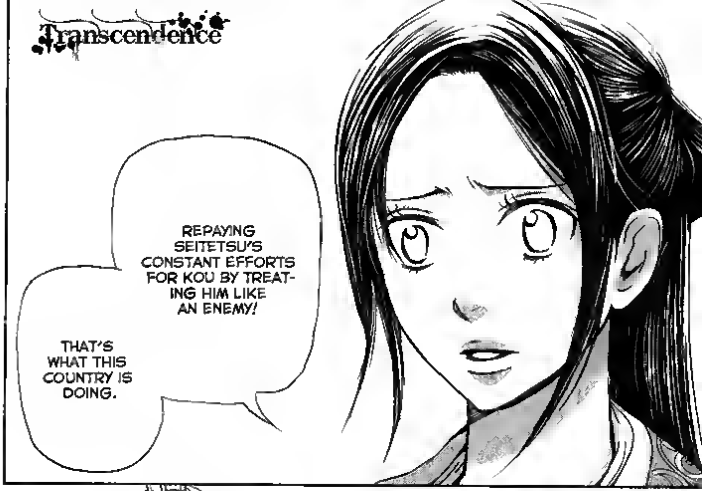
Ah!

Hakusei.

UNDERSTOOD.
THEN, FOR NOW, SEITETSU WILL BE CONFINED TO THE PALACE.
DEPENDING ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES, YOU MAY BE BANISHED FROM THE COUNTRY. UNDERSTOOD?

*T/N: THIS IS NOT A TYPO. IT'S THE ARCHAIC 'YOU'.

SO SURELY YOU DON'T REALIZE THAT YOU'RE DOING THE SAME TO SEITETSU!
YOU ALL REPROACH AH AS AN IMMORAL NATION FOR THROWING ME AWAY,
OH, *YE!

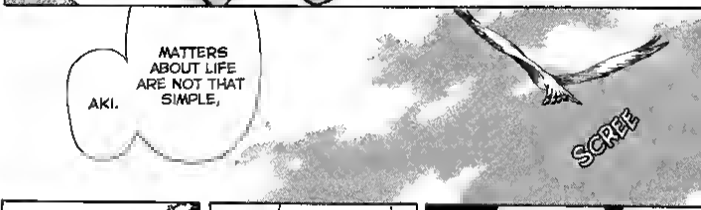

REPAYING SEITETSU'S CONSTANT EFFORTS FOR KOU BY TREATING HIM LIKE AN ENEMY!
THAT'S WHAT THIS COUNTRY IS DOING.

HA!
Kou's Prime Minister • Shinto
MURMUR
MURMUR
KE KE
KE KE
GRR...
HAVE YOU NO SHAME? AS A MAN, PROTECTING YOURSELF THROUGH A YOUNG GIRL?
AS EXPECTED, SEITETSU. COAXING THE PRINCESS MUST HAVE BEEN EASY.

How mortifying, truly mortifying!
THAT'S RIGHT.
THIS SEITETSU IS TRULY ASHAMED.
HOW MARVELOUS IT'D BE IF I WERE AS MANLY AS YOU, PRIME MINISTER-SAMA.
HM.
I'M MERELY ENVIOUS OF THE NOBLE PRIME MINISTER.
BECAUSE THERE'S DEFINITELY NO LOVER WHO'D COME TO THE PRIME MINISTER'S DEFENSE,
...!
FURIOUS
YOU INSOLENT MAN!
YOU ARE BUT A LOWLY MERCHANT SUBJECT! I WILL CUT YOU DOWN WITH A SINGLE STROKE!

AS YOU SAID, I'M BUT A MERCHANT.
BUT A MERCHANT DOESN'T GIVE AWAY HIS GOODS FOR FREE.
TWACK
IF YOU WANT THIS HEAD,
YOU HAVE TO BE WILLING TO STICK YOURS OUT AS WELL.

PRIME MINISTER-SAMA, THIS ISSUE WAS MOST SURELY MY FAULT.
AS I SAID BEFORE, I HAVE NO INTENTION OF RUNNING AWAY OR MAKING EXCUSES. DO NOT MIND AKI-SAMA'S COMMENTS.
KEUK!
EEK
KEUK
CHHH
KNG
SEITETSU, I'M RE-LIEVED.
FOR THE TIME BEING, YOU'LL BE...
... OKAY?
SEITETSU!
IF YOU WISH TO RE-STRAIN ME, I SHALL GO TO THE PRISON STRAIGHT AWAY, SO PLEASE EXCUSE ME.
STRIDE


MATTERS ABOUT LIFE ARE NOT THAT SIMPLE,
AKI.
SCREE

But still

SINCE I'M CONFINED TO THE PALACE AND AM UNABLE TO RETURN FOR THE TIME BEING,
YOU MUST MOVE.
SEI-TETSU!

MOVE FROM MY QUARTERS TO SEIITSU'S.
SPEAK TO HIM ABOUT THIS.
PARDON ME?

I'M NOT GOING TO MOVE! I SHALL GUARD THIS PLACE.
UM... IT'LL BE PROBLEMATIC IF YOU KEEP ACTING LIKE THIS.
WAH
THE PRIME MINISTER ISN'T UNJUSTIFIABLY ANGRY. DO HAS NO GROUNDS ON WHICH IT CAN GO TO WAR WITH KOU BUT... HUH?
WHY'S IT SO LOUD OUTSIDE?
BECAUSE THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE WHO THINK SEITETSU'S STILL HERE.
WAAH!
WAAH!
THE PEOPLE HAVE GATHERED AND ARE CAUSING A COMMOTION. BAD RUMORS ARE TRULY FAST AND SCARY.
AH!
LEAVE KOU!
DIE!
WAAH!
AH!
IT'LL BE YOUR FAULT IF WE GO TO WAR WITH AH!
THUD
THERE, I FINISHED CUTTING IT.

I WAS WONDERING ABOUT THIS EARLIER. USING AN EXCESSIVELY SHARP SHORT SWORD TO CUT A PEACH IS...
AKI-SAMA, THAT'S !
AHAH. THIS IS THE SWORD THAT THE PRIME MINISTER SENT SEITETSU.
YOU'LL KILL SOME-ONE!
FLASH
Say Ah.
SLAM
"DIE BY THIS SWORD."
THAT MUST BE THIS SWORD'S MEANING, RIGHT?
EVERY-ONE'S TRULY SELFISH AND COWARDLY!

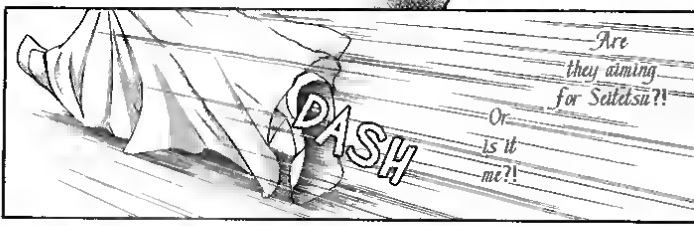
IF SEITETSU STICKS OUT HIS HEAD, EVEN AH WON'T COMPLAIN...
WHAT AN EASY-GOING THOUGHT! IS A PERSON'S LIFE THAT INSIGNIFICANT?!
BUT OF COURSE.
IF YOU COMPARE THAT PUNK'S LIFE TO THOSE OF THE MANY THAT LIVE IN THIS COUNTRY, OF COURSE IT'S INSIGNIFICANT.
I'M SAYING THAT THERE CAN BE NO VIRTUE AND JUSTICE UNTIL THERE'S PEACE.
ADDITIONALLY, THAT PUNK HAS MANY ENEMIES DUE TO CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES MOREOVER,
AKI-SAMA, WHO WORRIES OVER THAT PUNK BEYOND JUST ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES, IS PRECIOUS
THIS RECENT DISTURBANCE IS DANGEROUS, AND EVEN THE SERVANTS HAVE LEFT. PLEASE FOLLOW AND LEAVE THIS LONELY PLACE.

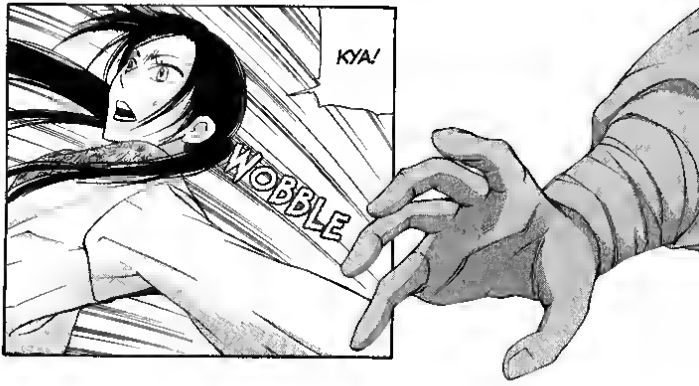
There's nothing I can do for Seitetsu beyond guarding his home

DIE!
WHAT'S THIS NOISE?
AND THE LANGUAGE IS AWFUL
IT'S GETTING LOUDER I'M SCARED
CRASH
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
"Aki-sama."
"What'll you do if there's an assessin among the gang beyond that wall?"
"It's dangerous."
Even your life is in danger
LET'S GO TO THE INNERMOST
HUH?

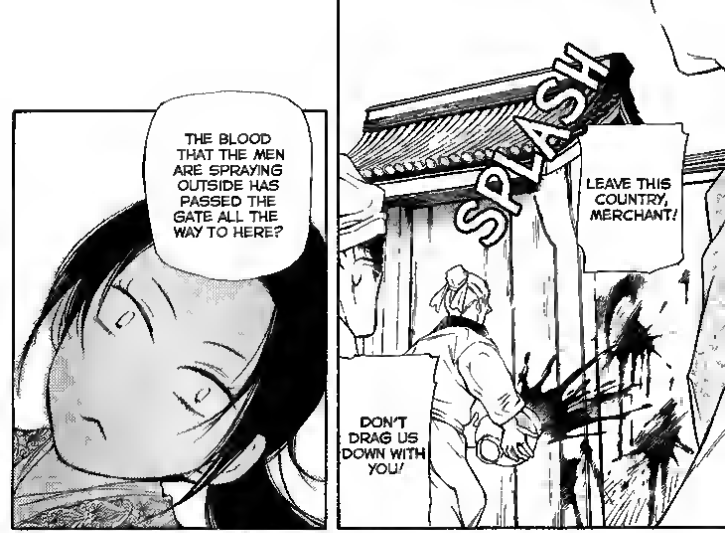
Whose...?!
Moreover, when did the riders get in?!

BLOOD?


DASH
Are they aiming for Seitetsu?!
Or... is it me?!


KYA!
WOBBLE

HAKUSEI!
It... can't be
SPLASH
DID YOU SEE THE BLOOD?


THE BLOOD THAT THE MEN ARE SPRAYING OUTSIDE HAS PASSED THE GATE ALL THE WAY TO HERE?
SPLASH
LEAVE THIS COUNTRY, MERCHANT!
DON'T DRAG US DOWN WITH YOU!

*T/N. DISASTER AND DEATH

THEY'RE SPRAYING PIG'S BLOOD THAT THEY OBTAINED FROM THE BUTCHER'S SHOP. IT APPEARS THAT PRINCESS...
ANIMAL BLOOD IS THE MARK OF AN *ILL OMEN.

DID YOU THINK I TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO COME HERE AND KILL SEITETSU BECAUSE I'M HOLDING A GRUDGE AGAINST WHAT HAPPENED LAST TIME?
WAS NOT AWARE OF THIS. YES, I UNDERSTAND.
.....

UNFORTUNATELY, I CANNOT GUARD THIS RESIDENCE BY MYSELF.
THE CROWD OUTSIDE MIGHT INVADE, SO PLEASE BE PARTICULARLY CAREFUL OF THE BACK DOOR.
AND ALSO

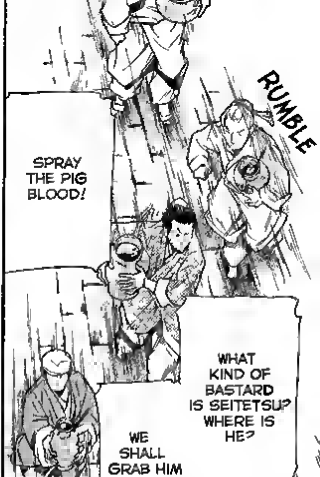
I DON'T DO THAT KIND OF THING.

Did he come to save me?

PLEASE DON'T LOOK AT ME WITH AN "I'M SORRY" EXPRESSION.
.....
IT'S UNAVOIDABLE TO THINK THAT OF ME AFTER I DID THOSE THINGS BEFORE.
AS LONG AS YOU'RE SAFE, THAT'S ENOUGH.
THOUGH I'M HURTING BECAUSE PRINCESS HATES ME DUE TO THESE PREVIOUS EVENTS AND IS FILLED WITH RAGE,

I'LL STILL PROTECT YOU.
SO IT'S OKAY.
SLAM
No I don't hate you

THEY'VE ALREADY ENTERED! PRINCESS, PLEASE GO INSIDE!
NO!


RUMBLE
SPRAY THE PIG BLOOD!
WHAT KIND OF BASTARD IS SEITETSU? WHERE IS HE?
WE SHALL GRAB HIM AND HAND HIM OVER TO AH.
RUMBLE

SPLASH
That I think you're precious
ACK!

HAKUSEI, SEND ME OUT.
How will I be able to communicate it to you?

SPLAT
STEP

A-AKI-SAMA.
AKI-SAMA'S HERE?

WHAT'S THIS?

YE SEEM TO FEAR WAR WITH AH, BUT WHAT OF THIS INSOLENT DEMEANOR?
WHAT'RE YE ALL DOING?
Though I'm a princess who was thrown away by her country
I AM AH'S PRINCESS.
PARDON?
WHAT SHOULD I DO ABOUT THESE DIRTY STAINS?
GLIDE
Take a deep breath. Don't tremble.
SHOWERING ME, AH'S PRINCESS, IS THE SAME AS SHOWERING AH.

YE INSOLENT FELLOWS! IF WAR ARISES, IT'S BECAUSE OF YOU ALL!!!
WITHDRAW IMMEDIATELY!!!

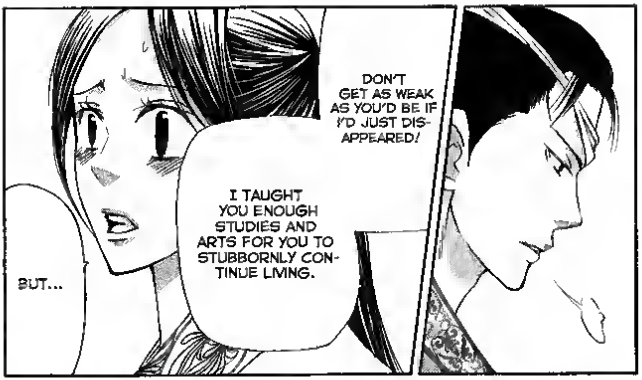
IF I SEE YOU AROUND HERE AGAIN, I SHALL SEND YOUR HEAD TO AH!
AND OF COURSE, YOU ALL WILL PAY THE PRICE!
WAAH!
AH.
COLLAPSE
THAT WAS SCARY.

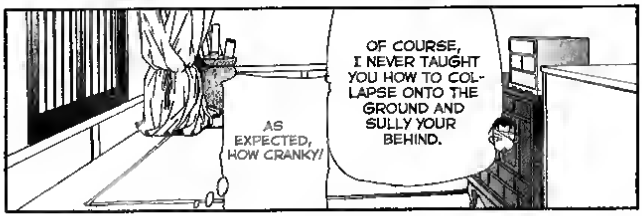
THAT WAS TOO RECK-LESS.
HAKUSEI! MY BLUFF WENT WELL!
HOW DID IT GO WELL IF YOU WERE FILLED WITH FEAR?
EVEN THOUGH THE CROWD WAS UNRULY, THEY WERE ALMOST UNDER CONTROL.
MY APOLOGIES. CAN YOU STAND?
Ah!
YOU SPEAK WELL FOR SOMEONE WHO COLLAPSED IN A PUDDLE OF ANIMAL BLOOD
DID YOU NOT LISTEN TO ME AND REMAIN IN THE HOUSE?
THERE'S NO NEED TO CHEEKILY LEND A HAND...

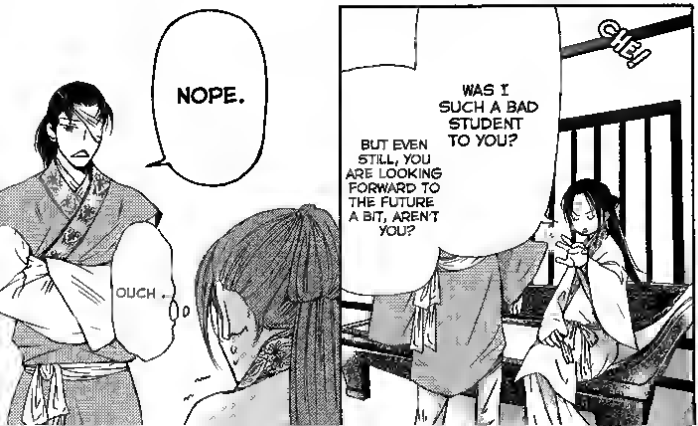
YOU'RE A HELPLESS CHILD.

SEITETSU!

SQUEEZE
THANK GOD! THANK GOD YOU CAME BACK SAFELY!
THOUGH OF COURSE, I FIGURED IT'D BE ALRIGHT SINCE IT WAS YOU
STOP WITH THE NONSENSE AND CHANGE YOUR CLOTHES! YOU SMELL PROFUSELY OF BLOOD.
(In the outside)
SEI-TETSU!
SEI-TETSU!
STOP IT.
I can't breathe.
SQUEEZE
GRIP


DON'T GET AS WEAK AS YOU'D BE IF I'D JUST DISAPPEARED!
I TAUGHT YOU ENOUGH STUDIES AND ARTS FOR YOU TO STUBBORNLY CONTINUE LIVING.
BUT...


OF COURSE, I NEVER TAUGHT YOU HOW TO COLLAPSE ONTO THE GROUND AND SULLY YOUR BEHIND.
AS EXPECTED, HOW CRANKY!


CHE!
WAS I SUCH A BAD STUDENT TO YOU?
BUT EVEN STILL, YOU ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO THE FUTURE A BIT, AREN'T YOU?
NOPE.
OUCH.

I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO IT A LOT.

SO, LEAVE ME.
... PARDON?
IT'S UNAVOIDABLE THAT MY SUBORDINATE CAPTURED IN AH WILL REVEAL HER RELATIONSHIP TO KOU.
IF A FORMAL MESSENGER FROM AH ARRIVES TO ASK OF THIS SIDE'S WRONGDOING,
THEY MAY ASK FOR MY HEAD OR ASK ME TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY.
THAT !
YOU MUSTN'T BE BOUND TO ME ANY LONGER
WHY?!

YOU WERE CURIOUS ABOUT...
MY REAL IDENTITY, WEREN'T YOU?
I SHALL TELL YOU THAT STORY NOW.
CREAK
ARE YOU OKAY? THIS KIND OF FOUL PLACE IS...
RATTLE RATTLE
IT DOESN'T MATTER.
THUD THUD
Ah • Palace's Dungeon

Queen... Do We Queen Deserve Just Queen Do?
IS THIS WOMAN THE SPY THAT QUEEN DO CAUGHT?
YES!
King Ah...?!
WOMAN.
SPEAK IN DETAIL OF THE MAN WHO EMPLOYS YOU.

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Illustrated by KANEYOSHI IZUMI
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Jocu no Hana
Volume 03
Chapter 05
Part B

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My original name was Seigai. The Sei family's second son. Seigai.
Seitetsu. That's my current name.

I'M NOT!
TURN
ARE YOU CRYING?

WIPE
WHY ARE YOU CRYING?
A GUY SHOULDN'T BE CRYING LIKE THAT.
I SAID I'M NOT!
BUT...
YOU'RE REALLY STUBBORN. WHAT ARE YOU?!
YOU UGLY THING!
RUN RUN RUN
WHACK

STRUGGLE
PUSH
PLEASE FORGIVE HIS RUDENESS! MY YOUNGER BROTHER'S STILL IMMATURE... AHAHA.
RATHER THAN THAT, WHO'S THIS GIRL, MAKING YOU ACT THAT WAY?!
I DON'T WANT TO, OLDER BROTHER! HOW CAN A PROUD MAN BOW HIS HEAD TO A GIRL?!
HEY! STAY STILL!
IDIOT!
I DON'T WANT TO DO THAT SINCE IT LOOKS STUPID!
LOOK AT ME! SEE HOW MUCH I KEEP MY HEAD DOWN IN ORDER TO LURE OUT THE CUTE PALACE MAID I LIKE!
YOU IDIOT! JUST HOW MANY YEARS IS IT GOING TO TAKE FOR YOU TO REALIZE THAT MEN MUST NEVER LIFT THEIR HEADS IN FRONT OF WOMEN?!

IT'S THE PRINCESS, OF COURSE!
Transcendence
EH?
That was...

my first encounter with that person
I ASSUME THE REASON YOU CALLED ME TODAY IS BECAUSE OF MY RUDE ATTITUDE EARLIER
BUT!
DAMMIT!
I PLEAD YOU TO ONLY PUNISH ME.
WITH BROTHER WITH THE SEI FAMILY, IT HAS NOTHING TO DO, SO IF YOU'RE PLANNING TO PUNISH SOMEONE,

SEIGA!
HOW OLD ARE YOU BECOMING THIS YEAR?
YES.
TE-TEN YEARS OLD.
REALLY?
I'M THIRTEEN!

Yes?
So what?
WHAT A RELIEF! I THINK LIKE THIS, WE'LL BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER.
GRIN
GRIN
She's smiling...
IT APPEARS YOU'VE COME FROM THE BORDER. WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THIS PALACE?
UMM. IT'S SPLENDID.
It's quite scary...
ISN'T IT? BUT I HATE THAT THERE ARE SO MANY WATERWAYS AND MOSQUITOES.
RIGHT..
OUR AGES ARE SIMILAR SO I THINK WE'LL GET ALONG WELL.
With what evidence
EH?!

FROM TODAY ONWARDS, YOU'LL BE MY SERVANT.
Whaaat?!
ALTHOUGH AS LONG AS I'M BORN AS THE SON OF A NOBLE, I KNOW THAT IT'S MY DUTY TO SERVE THE ROYAL FAMILY!
THEN WHAT'S WRONG? WHAT'S NOT TO YOUR LIKING?
YOU!
I THINK THAT THE KING CALLED YOUR BROTHERS TO THE KOU PALACE FOR THAT REASON.
OF COURSE.

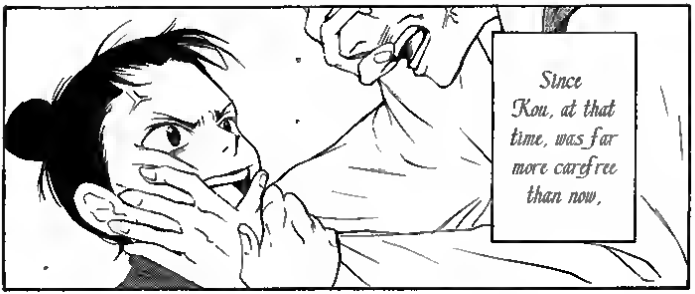
THE FACT THAT HE'S MOURNING FOR YOUR FATHER SEIEI IS THE MAIN REASON
I'M SORRY.
IT'S ONLY LOGICAL THAT YOU WERE CRYING BACK THEN,
SINCE THERE'S NO ONE WHO WOULDN'T BE SAD AFTER LOSING THEIR PARENTS.
DON'T FEEL TOO DISCOUR-AGED.
OKAY
You don't know a thing!

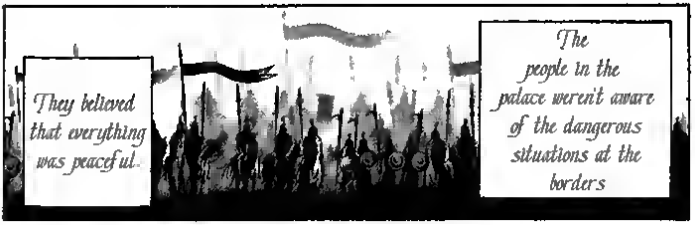
I don't like this princess
SIGH
IT'S GOOD THAT I AVOIDED PUNISHMENT, BUT IN THE END, I'VE ENDED UP BEING SELECTED AS THAT PRINCESS'S SERVANT...
DROP
"Just because you're my servant doesn't mean you have to be by my side all the time"
"To get used to the palace, go to the study hall"
CHATTER
CHATTER
HEY! THAT'S MY SPOT.
AH, I'M SORRY.

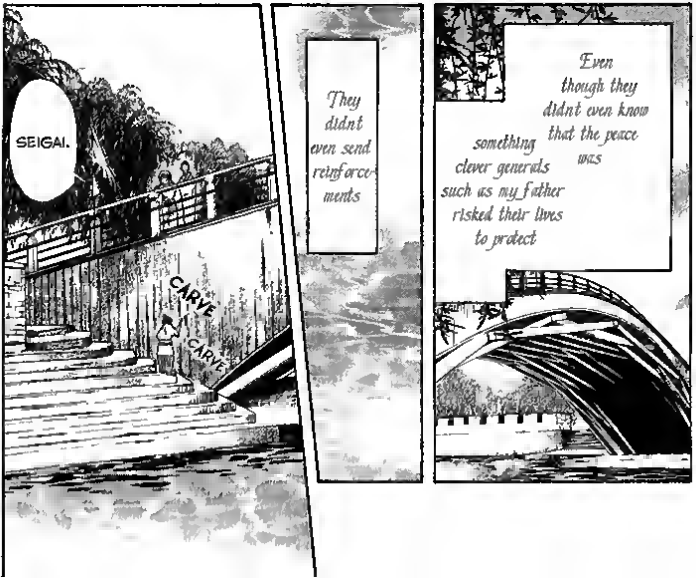
IT'S THE SECOND SON OF THE SEI FAMILY, WHO BECAME THE PRINCESS'S SERVANT.
AH.
WHO'RE YOU?
SO HE'S THE SON OF A FOOLISH DEFEATED GENERAL.
I-I'M SEIGAI!
IT HASN'T BEEN A WHILE SINCE I MOVED FROM THE BORDER AREAS TO THE KOU PALACE, SO I THINK I'LL HAVE A LOT OF LACKING POINTS...
HM.

FATHER...
DYING AT A SMALL QUARREL AT THE BORDERS WHICH ISN'T EVEN A BATTLE, WHAT KIND OF WEAK GENERAL WAS YOUR FATHER?
IT'S A SHAME TO THE COUNTRY.
CLENCH
ISN'T...
A FOOLISH DEFEATED GENERAL
HA HA HA
OF COURSE-
YOU'RE PROBABLY DELIGHTED THAT THE KING PITIED HIS SILLY DEATH AND LET HIS CHILDREN INTO THE ROYAL STUDY HALL WITHOUT PASSING THE EXAM.
HA!
GRABB
IF THAT WAS HIS PLAN, HE MAY HAVE BEEN THE BEST GENERAL.

CRASH
I THOUGHT THAT IF YOU WERE ABLE TO CALL MY FATHER A FOOLISH DEFEATED GENERAL, YOU'D AT LEAST HAVE A HEAD WHICH WOULD BE ABLE TO AVOID SURPRISE ATTACKS.
LET ME THINK.
WHA- WHAT'RE YOU DOING?!
HIII
THIS BRAT!
YOU HAVE SUCH A THICK HEAD THAT THIS WOODEN PLANK SHATTERED.
AS I EXPECTED.
THIS...


Since Kou, at that time, was far more carefree than now,


They believed that everything was peaceful.
The people in the palace weren't aware of the dangerous situations at the borders


SEIGAI.
CARVE
CARVE
They didn't even send reinforcements
Even though they didn't even know that the peace was something clever generals such as my father risked their lives to protect

was it worth my father's life?
To guard the ones who only get pampered in the palace.
IF YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT THE STUDY HALL, I WON'T GO. I DON'T WANT TO GO TO PLACES LIKE THAT...
AND I DON'T LIKE BEING YOUR SERVANT!
HMPH

HEY! DO YOU REALISE WHO YOU'RE TALKING TO?!
PRINCESS!
IT'S OKAY. YOU MAY LEAVE FOR NOW.
I'M WORRIED THAT THE BRAT WILL DO SOMETHING NASTY TO YOU!
ARE YOU OKAY WITH THIS? ARE YOU GOING TO BE OKAY?!
ISN'T THE PERSON WHO ISN'T OKAY THE MOST, YOU?
SEIGAI ISN'T GOING TO DO ANY THING. WE'RE JUST GOING TO TALK
OKAY?
Although you've lived a relaxed life without knowing this world
IT SEEMS THAT YOU DISLIKE ME, SEIGAI.
THAT'S NOT TRUE!

I DISLIKE YOU A LOT.
.....
HE'S CHANGED COMPLETELY AND IS WALKING THE ROAD OF BADNESS...
HMMM
He's even scribbling on the wall...
MY FATHER...
WASN'T A FOOLISH DEFEATED GENERAL, NO MATTER WHAT PEOPLE SAY!
SOMEONE WHO DIDN'T SHOW WEAKNESS EVEN WHEN GUARDING THE BORDERS WITH SUCH A SMALL ARMY...
HE WAS... A GREAT MAN...
IF ONLY THEY HAD SENT REINFORCEMENTS...
RE-INFORCEMENTS
Dying by a sword is a warrior's cherished ambition...

"Do you understand? You shouldn't blame anyone."
"This father doesn't blame anyone."

I WISH THAT THIS KIND OF COUNTRY...
WOULD JUST GET ITS BORDERS BREACHED LIKE THIS AND GET DESTROYED!
YES...
THAT MIGHT COME TRUE.
RUSTLE
RUSTLE

IT'S SUCH A SAD STORY...
DROP
DROP
SEIGAI. LEND ME THIS DAGGER.
EH?
IT'S OKAY IF YOU GET ANGRY.
YOU CAN ALWAYS GET FORGIVENESS FOR VANDALIZING THE STUDY HALL BUILDING. SHOULD I WRITE, "SEIGAI APPEARS!"?
AH! WAIT A MINUTE!
I'm going to get arrested
CARVE
CARVE
No... Even if you just acknowledge it like that something's a little...
SEIGAI.

ONE CAN'T JUST LET THE COUNTRY GO TO RUIN BY ITSELF. THAT'D BE TOO VEXING.
BUT...
JUST BECAUSE OF THAT...
AND RUIN THIS COUNTRY WITH YOUR OWN HANDS.
IT'S LIKE THIS ANYWAY, SO JUST BECOME REALLY GREAT,
SCRATCH
BUT, AFTER TWENTY OR THIRTY YEARS, WHEN YOU'VE BECOME A GREAT ADULT,
YOU'RE PROBABLY RIGHT
IF THAT HAPPENS, THE ONE IN MOST TROUBLE WILL BE YOU.

WHAT KIND OF MEANING WOULD THERE BE TO SUCH A COUNTRY?
IF IT'S STILL A COUNTRY YOU'D LIKE TO RUIN,
Royalty
People who stand above others from birth

IS...
That person's definitely one of them
WHAT I'M THINK-ING, HOW IS IT?
IS WHAT I'M SAYING WEIRD?
I DON'T KNOW
HU...
HUHA!
WIPE

PRIN-
CESS, YOUR
SCRIBBLES
ARE TOO
RUSHED.
I can't understand what they say
WHAT?
Is that why you laughed?
DASH
DASH
DASH
HUFF
HUFF
I...
SORRY
I'M LATE!
HUFF
HUFF
Didn't quit as that person's servant

I learnt the palace's culture, learnt literature,
so nobody could discover any errors
WIPE
WIPE
I didn't quit study hall either
DOZE
DOZE
DOZE
My days were so busy that I nearly lost consciousness, but I later gained clearance, despite still doing the same job
Two years later—
NOW, I'LL ANNOUNCE THE TOP PLACES OF THE EXAM.
THE FIRST PLACE GOES TO SEIGAI.

*E/N: XIANG MEANS MINISTER IN POLITICS. ZHANG MEANS SOMEONE WHO CAN BE A WARRIOR AND FIGHT THE ENEMIES.
AGITATION
FIRST PLACE AT THE AGE OF TWELVE? THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?
WHAAAT?!
NOW I CLEARLY UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU THINK OF ME.
OR DID HE THREATEN THE MASTER WITH SOME KIND OF COWARDLY THING?! THAT MUST BE IT!
MY FATHER-
ALTHOUGH WE LIVED NEAR THE BORDERS FAR AWAY FROM THE PALACE, I DIDN'T SLACK WHILE STUDYING...
TAUGHT ME LITERATURE VERY STRICTLY.
ON THE INSIDE, HE WAS *XIANG AND ON THE OUTSIDE, HE WAS *ZHANG.

MY FATHER, WHOM YOU MOCKED AS A FOOLISH DEFEATED GENERAL, WAS SUCH A PERSON.
I KNEW IT, YOU CAN'T FOOL THE BLOOD, THE SEI FAMILY'S BLOOD!
Although you're dead
DAMN IT, ACTING ALL COOL...
AL-THOUGH SEISUI'S FAMOUS BECAUSE OF THAT,
HE'S FROM THE BLOODLINE OF SEISUI, THE BEST MINISTER OF A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.
Father.
Thank you

HE'S ALSO FAMOUS FOR TAKING THE PRINCESS BACK THEN AS HIS WIFE.
I'm jealous.
THANK YOU.
YOU'RE HERE! CONGRATULATIONS ON GETTING FIRST PLACE.
JOG JOG JOG
SEIGA!
WERE YOU DRAWING A PICTURE?
EH?
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
YES! I TRIED TO DRAW YOU.

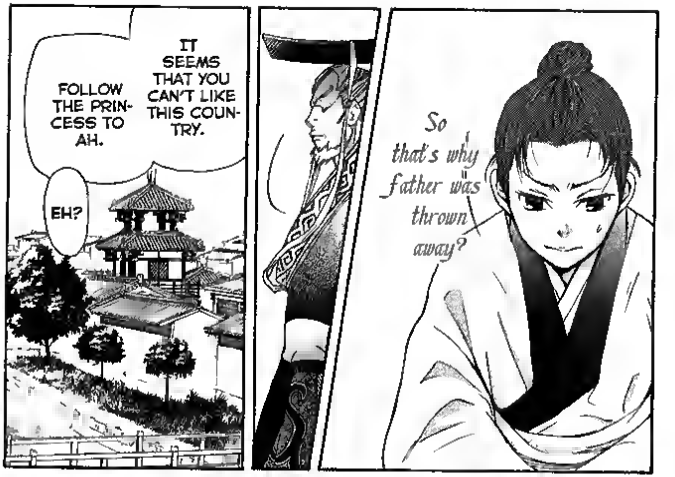
DE-
DEMON?!
I... DON'T KNOW... IT LOOKS A LITTLE ALIKE.
AT LEAST THE FACT THAT IT HAS TWO EYES, ONE NOSE AND ONE MOUTH MAKES IT KIND OF THE SAME...
THAT'S A RELIEF! IT'S BETTER THAN THE ONE I DREW AT THE BRIDGE LONG AGO, RIGHT?
IN A WAY
So much, that, it's surprising
YOU TOLD ME THAT IT WASN'T GOOD BACK THEN.
ME-
MORIES OF LONG AGO ARE POPPING UP.

"Little Brother! Our Princess Kou is a known beauty"
Hehe this big brother
Not to return to the borders
"Don't just act stiff, but try your best to get her as your wife, like Geisui"
As if.
IT'S GIB-BER-ISH.
NO WAY.
EVEN IF HE WERE TO CONCEDE A HUNDRED TIMES, IF YOU LOOK AT AGE, THERE'S MORE OF A CHANCE WITH BIG BROTHER.
IT'S IDIOTIC.
IT'S NOT LIKE SHE'S UGLY.
NO, SHE'S NOT UGLY AT ALL.
YOU! MOVE BACK!
BLUSH
FOR A MAN, A WOMAN

It was the first time since my father passed away and I got called to the palace with my brother
That was the second time I saw King Kou in the immense palace

To be continued...

I HEARD YOU GOT FIRST PLACE.
YES!
He remembers me?
ARE YOU SEIEI'S SON?
LEARN BY LOOKING AT THE OUTSIDE WORLD AND LEARN MANY THINGS, FULFILL WHAT SEIEI HASN'T.
I WILL SEND YOU TO AH.
I WON'T ASK YOU TO FORGIVE ME FOR YOUR FATHER'S ISSUE
I COULDN'T INITIATE A WAR BY SENDING REINFORCEMENTS.
KNOWING WHEN TO GIVE IS ALSO A PART OF POLITICS.


IT SEEMS THAT YOU CAN'T LIKE THIS COUNTRY.
FOLLOW THE PRINCESS TO AH.
EH?
So that's why father was thrown away?

I DECIDED TO GIVE THE PRINCESS TO KING AH.

At the young age of 15,
it was decided that she would become the queen of a far Western country
Sou
Kou
Ah
Do
It was the result of preparing against attacks of the neighboring countries especially Do's
It wasn't something surprising Ever since my father passed away two years ago the alliance issue remained
HEY, THAT LOAD GOES UNDER THIS FLAG.
WE BETTER HURRY OR WE WON'T MAKE IT. IT'S ONLY A FEW DAYS UNTIL THE PRINCESS'S DEPARTURE!

It's pure perfection.
OH, THIS HAIR DECORATION IS SO BEAUTIFUL!
SPARKLE
SPARKLE
OUT OF ALL THE GIFTS KING AH SENT TO YOU, THIS IS REALLY EXCEPTIONAL!
IF SOMEONE SENT THIS TO ME, I WOULD GO AND BECOME THEIR WIFE IMMEDIATELY!
HMMPH
I WASN'T TALKING ABOUT YOU! I ONLY SEE YOU AS A SIBLING, NOT AS A HUSBAND.
THAT HAIR DECORATION...
DON'T COME.
You're crying
CREAK
SQUAWK
FLAP
FLAP
IT ISN'T FROM KING AH, BUT IS A CONGRATULATORY GIFT FROM THE SEI FAMILY.

A FORBIDDEN LOVE WITH A SIBLING... ISN'T TOTALLY IMPOSSIBLE!
IMPOSSIBLE
TURN
SEIGAI.
YOU SHOULDN'T TEASE HER.
THAT HAIR DECORATION ISN'T FROM KING KOU, NOR THE SEI FAMILY.
IT IS A GIFT FROM FATHER.
EVEN IF I GO TO AH, THE DRAGON* ON THIS DECORATION WILL PROTECT ME.
HE'S SO CARING.
*T/N: THE DRAGON IS THE KING'S SYMBOL.
LIAR!

KING KOU ONLY THINKS OF THE PRINCESS AS A TOOL FOR ALLIANCE MATTERS!
AND IF YOU BECOME USELESS, HE'LL SIMPLY THROW YOU AWAY... LIKE HE DID TO MY FATHER!
ARE YOU OKAY WITH THAT?!

I HEARD THAT AH IS A PROSPEROUS COUNTRY DUE TO TRADING WITH THE WEST. THEIR ACADEMIA IS ALSO EVOLVING.
SAYING SOMETHING RIDICULOUS LIKE THAT!
IT'S OKAY. PLEASE LEAVE US ALONE FOR A WHILE.

DON'T YOU WANT TO GO THERE?
I'D LIKE TO GO, BUT
IS THAT YOUR WISH?
BECOMING THE WIFE OF A KING YOU'VE NEVER MET BEFORE, IN A COUNTRY FAR TO THE WEST WHERE YOU'VE NEVER BEEN BEFORE...
IS THAT YOUR WISH? YOUR HAPPINESS?
SEIGAI
DO YOU KNOW WHY THE KING IS CALLED 'SON OF GOD'?

HE LIVES FOR THE COUNTRY AND DIES FOR THE COUNTRY. HE CANNOT LIVE FOR HIS OWN HAPPINESS OR SADNESS.
IT'S BECAUSE HE'S SOMEONE WHO REIGNS OVER THE COUNTRY ON BEHALF OF THE HEAVENS.
HE MUST SIT ON A COLD THRONE WITHOUT ANYONE BY HIS SIDE.
HE SOMETIMES TAKES STRICT DECISIONS FOR THE COUNTRY'S SAKE.

AS HIS DAUGHTER, I'M THE SAME.
GRAB
SOMEONE WHO'S HUMAN, YET ISN'T HUMAN.
THAT IS A KING.

YOU'RE A PERSON!
YOU'RE A PERSON WHO CAN BE HELD LIKE THIS, AND WHOSE WARMTH IS FELT WHEN GRABBED LIKE THIS!
HOLD
SOFT AND...
OWW.
BLUSH
RELEASE
A... ANYWAY!

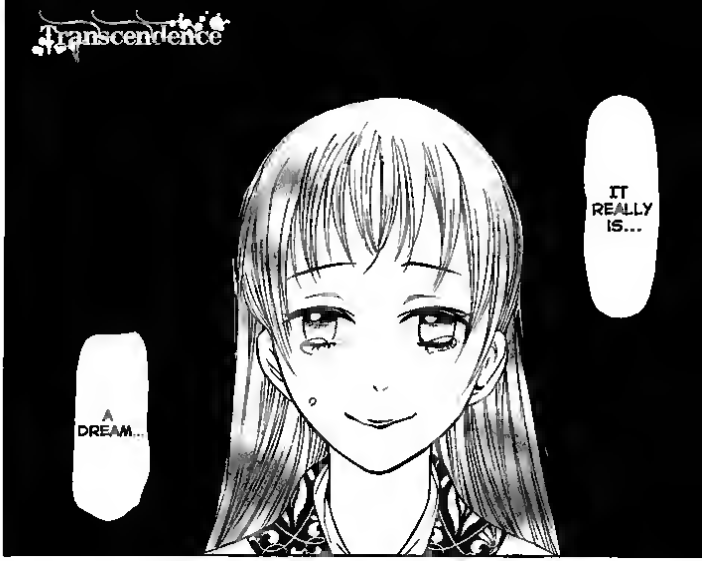
IS A COUNTRY THAT IMPORTANT?
TO RUIN IT IF YOU THINK IT'S A FOOLISH COUNTRY.
YOU SAID THIS...
THE JOY YOU FELT WHILE DRAWING YOUR POORLY DRAWN DRAWING.
THE TASTE OF THE TEA YOU SHARED WHILE HIDING.
THE KINDNESS THAT YOU SHOWED EVEN TO ME.
WERE THOSE ALL LIES?
IS THE COUNTRY MORE IMPORTANT?
JUST SAY THAT YOU ACTUALLY WISH TO RUN AWAY!

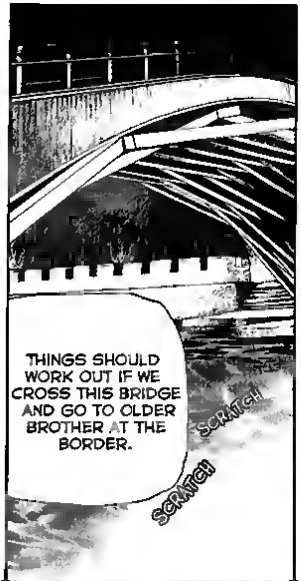
IF YOU DO SO, I WILL SAVE YOU.

AND RUN AWAY, EVEN TO THE END OF THE WORLD.
I'LL TAKE YOU,
IF I RUN AWAY NOW, I'LL BE PUNISHED BY THE HEAVENS.
THE REASON I COULD LIVE PEACEFULLY WITHOUT WORKING UNTIL NOW WAS SO THAT I'D BE A HELP TO THE COUNTRY.
BUT—
OR RATHER, I'D LOVE IT. I WOULDN'T NEED TO USE PALACE WORDS THAT MAKE ME FEEL LIKE I'M BITING MY TONGUE!
PERHAPS YOU'RE RIGHT.
PRINCESS! I DISLIKED THIS COUNTRY FROM THE START, SO THAT DOESN'T MATTER!
IF YOU DO SUCH A THING, YOU WON'T HAVE A GOOD FUTURE AHEAD.
YOU WON'T EVEN BE ABLE TO HAVE A GOOD CAREER IN KOU.

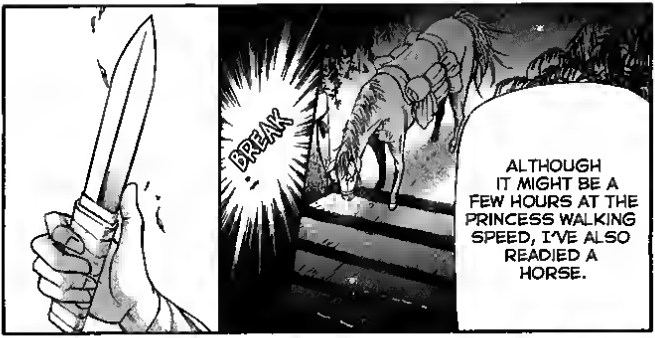
BUT THAT'S FOR THE HEAVENS TO DECIDE.
IT'S NOT YOUR DECISION!
HAHAHA!
I REALLY CAN'T BEAT YOU!
HA.

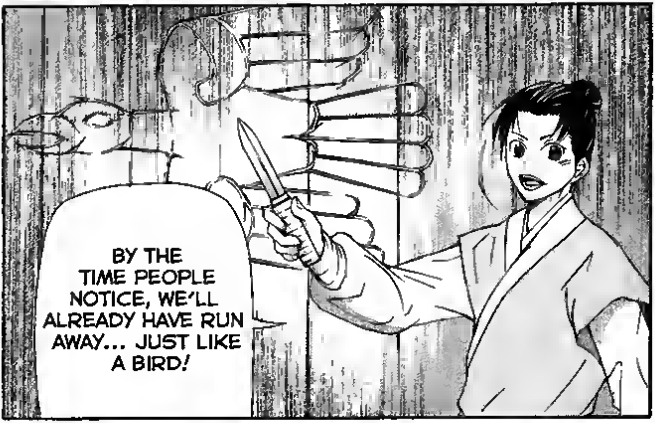
THEN, THE ONLY TIME THAT WE CAN BE HIDDEN FROM OTHERS IS WHEN WE'RE HEADING TO AH FOR THE MARRIAGE, RIGHT?!
HAHA, GREAT. THEN I'LL GO GET READY.
BEING ABLE TO RUN OUT OF THE PALACE FEELS LIKE A DREAM.
NO.
ARE YOU WORRIED, PRINCESS?
THAT'S ALSO CLOSE TO THE WELCOMING FEAST.
I'LL WAIT UNDER THE BRIDGE BY THE MOAT!
THUNK


IT REALLY IS...
A DREAM...


THINGS SHOULD WORK OUT IF WE CROSS THIS BRIDGE AND GO TO OLDER BROTHER AT THE BORDER.
SCRATCH
SCRATCH

SCRATCH
YEAAAH
YEAAAH


BREAK
ALTHOUGH IT MIGHT BE A FEW HOURS AT THE PRINCESS WALKING SPEED, I'VE ALSO READIED A HORSE.

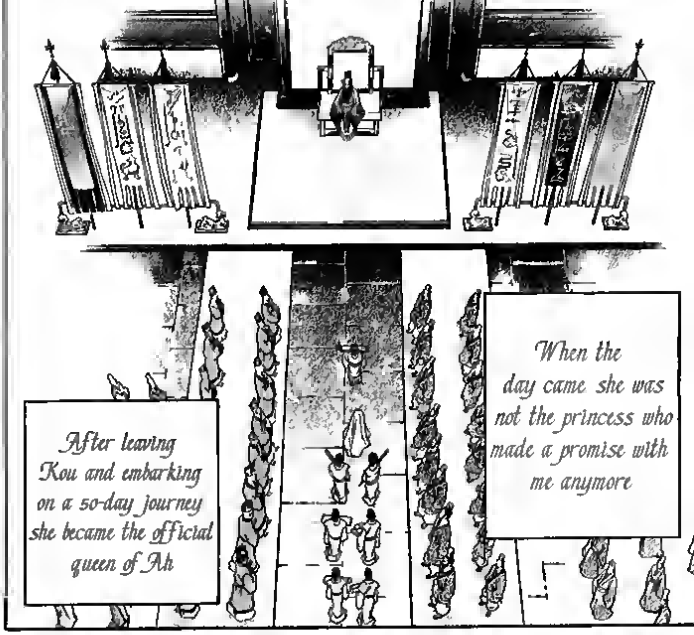

BY THE TIME PEOPLE NOTICE, WE'LL ALREADY HAVE RUN AWAY... JUST LIKE A BIRD!

SO, SHE'LL COME.
WHOOSH

The princess will definitely come.

RING
CHEERS FOR KING AH!
CHEERS FOR KING KOU!
PRIN-CESS NO...

CHEERS FOR QUEEN KOU!
AH'S QUEEN.


After leaving Kou and embarking on a 50-day journey she became the official queen of Ah
When the day came she was not the princess who made a promise with me anymore

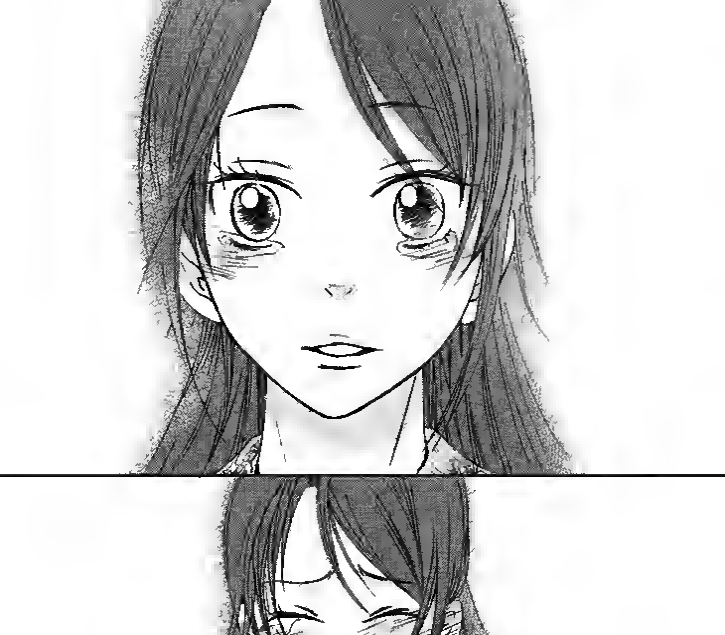
If she was a person who could just throw away something like that If she was a cold person who only cared about herself
I couldnt hate her
The weight on those slight shoulders was just too heavy
Transcendence

Then when I was ten, I wouldn't have loved that person
MOTH-ER...
BZ BZ
Kou • Today

SHE SHOULD HAVE RUN AWAY WITH YOU!
IF SHE HAD, YOU WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN BORN.
AH.
TH
THAT'S RIGHT!
But...
If she was with this person would Mother have lived a happy life?
Smiling being protected by this person

I'M SORRY!
AH WAS THE COUNTRY MOTHER WENT TO, THROWING AWAY HER HAPPINESS.
BUT THAT COUNTRY WAS ONLY EVER CRUEL TO HER.
MAKING HER ILL TREATING HER BADLY
AND KILLING HER IN THE END!
THERE WAS NOTHING GOOD...
NOT AT ALL...
NO.
AFTER A YEAR SINCE SHE BECAME THE QUEEN OF AH, I ASKED HER,
"ARE YOU HAPPY?"

"Why are you asking such a thing?"
"I have this child."
"Of course I'm happy."



DEFINITELY, THERE MAY HAVE BEEN A LOT OF MISFORTUNES IN HER LIFE.
BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN THERE WASN'T ANY HAPPINESS.
THE CHILDHOOD WHEN SHE GOT ALONG INNOCENTLY WITH ME MAY HAVE BEEN SHORT,
BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN IT WASN'T THERE.
Transcendence

ALTHOUGH I COULDN'T EVEN TOUCH HER WITH ONE FINGER,
I RESOLVED MYSELF TO PROTECT THAT PERSON IN AH.
The young me
He foolishly believed that it was possible

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Jocu no Hana
Volume 03
Chapter 06
Part A

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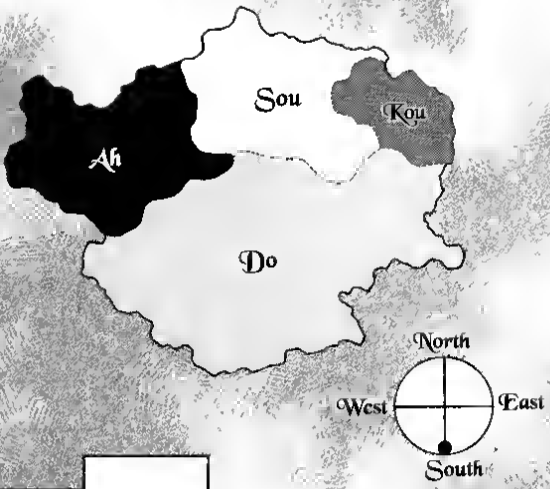
Joou no Hana
Chapter 7



Ah country is the youngest of the four.

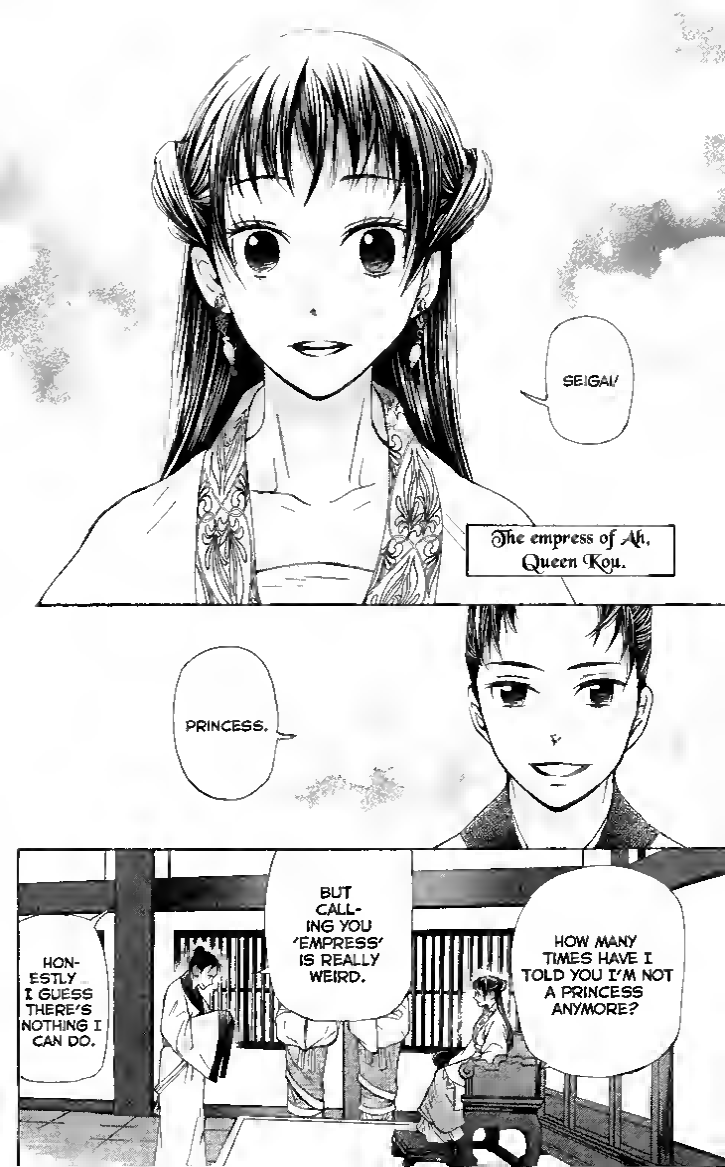
It is a rich country that has produced rare items and knowledge from trading with the Western regions.

CHATTER
THE YOUNG MASTER OVER THERE! WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?
RED WINE FROM THE WEST, ANIMAL SKINS FROM THE SOUTH!
THIS IS AH'S MARKET, WHERE YOU CAN FIND ANYTHING RARE OR FAMOUS.
HEY, LOOK!
Seigai (Seitetsu)

GOLD... MAYBE?
...THAT'S WHY YOU'RE HERE?
YOU'VE GOT A BIT OF AN EASTERN ACCENT. WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE IN AH?
OH?
WOW I GUESS A MERCHANT WOULD BE ABLE TO TELL.
THIEF!
AAAH!
CRASH
CATCH THAT ROBBER!
I'M FROM KOU IN THE EAST.
HEK
YOUNG MASTER, BEHIND YOU--!

THUD
WHERE THINGS COLLECT, THERE ARE PEOPLE. WHERE GOLD COLLECTS, THERE IS DESIRE.
WHERE WEALTH COLLECTS, THERE IS CONFLICT!
CLINK

MY JOB IS TO PROTECT OUR COUNTRY'S PRINCESS FROM THAT BATTLE-FIELD.
I GET IT, AND ALSO THAT YOUTH AND THAT STRENGTH!
YOU SHOULD HAVE SAID THAT EARLIER.
OH!
BASICALLY THE PERSON YOU SERVE IS
KOU?
...?
THAT BOY DID IT!
GATHER

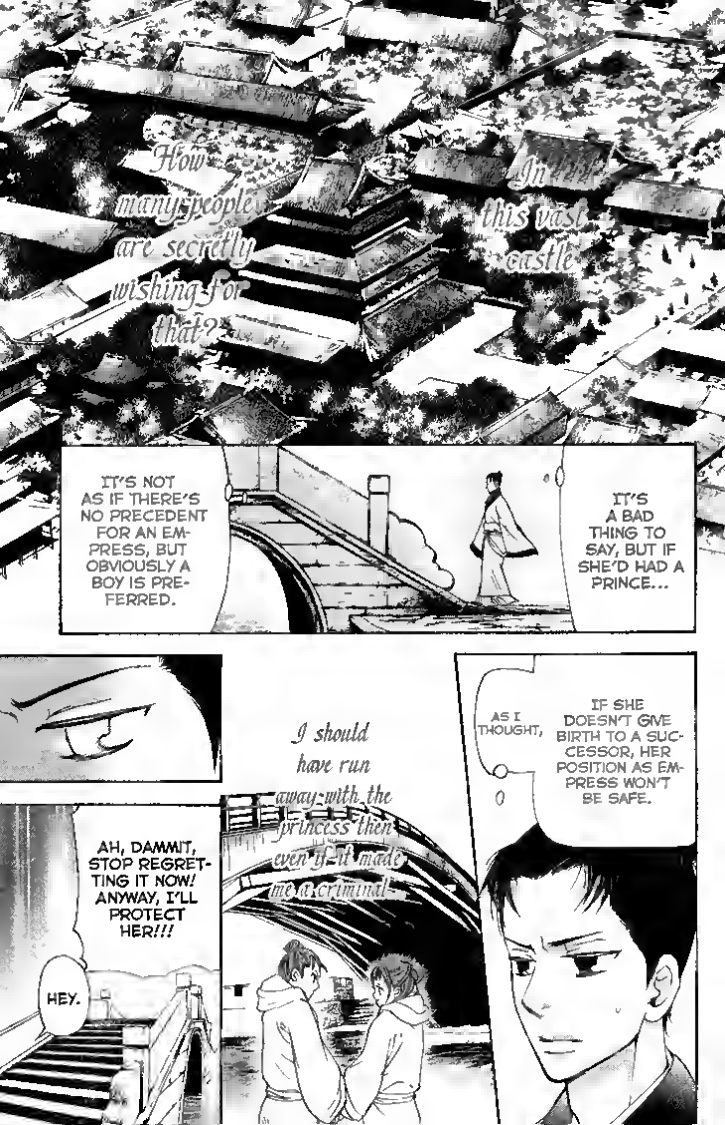

SEIGA!
The empress of Ah, Queen Kou.
PRINCESS.
HONESTLY I GUESS THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO.
BUT CALLING YOU 'EMPRESS' IS REALLY WEIRD.
HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I TOLD YOU I'M NOT A PRINCESS ANYMORE?

It's a lu
Prin...
TUG
I can't bear the fact that you're someone's queen
Please stay as my "princess" even now
CRAWL
MM.

TAKES OUT
AH...
MMM.
Aki
OH MY! THE PRINCESS LIKES SEIGAI DOESN'T SHE?
STRUGGLE
PRI PRIN- CESS.
STRUGGLE
THIS IS THE PRIN- CESS...!!!
PUT
MMM.
HAH
Wishing for him to say thank you...
HAH

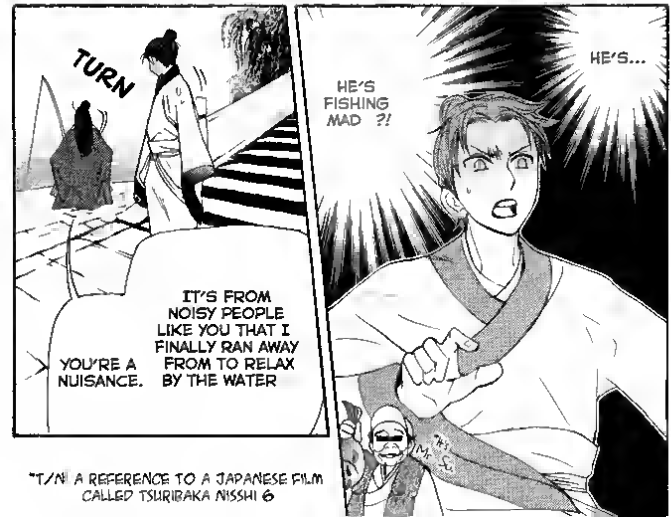
WAAAA!
SHE'S SO ANNOYING!
PRINCESS
THERE, THERE, PRINCESS. YOU SHOULDN'T CRY BECAUSE OF SOME BORING MAN.
LIFT

SE SEIGAI, SHE'S A BIT YOUNG TO BE TAUGHT THINGS LIKE THAT
APPARENTLY THEY WON'T GO AWAY UNTIL YOU'RE GIVEN EXPENSIVE THINGS. THAT'S WHY YOU SHOULDN'T CRY.
You're an awful man! Come back after you've bought me a hair pin!
ACCORDING TO MY BROTHER, WOMEN'S TEARS AREN'T CHEAP.
She's certainly adorable
But if that's all she is there will be problems

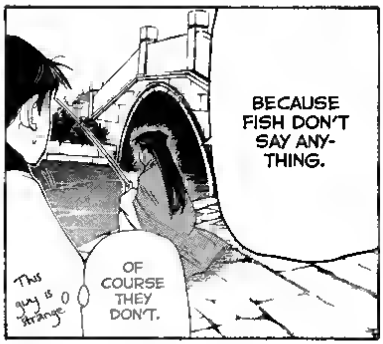

How many people are secretly wishing for that?
In this vast castle
IT'S NOT AS IF THERE'S NO PRECEDENT FOR AN EMPRESS, BUT OBVIOUSLY A BOY IS PREFERRED.
IT'S A BAD THING TO SAY, BUT IF SHE'D HAD A PRINCE...
AS I THOUGHT,
IF SHE DOESN'T GIVE BIRTH TO A SUCCESSOR, HER POSITION AS EMPRESS WON'T BE SAFE.
I should have run away with the princess then even if it made me a criminal.
AH, DAMMIT, STOP REGRETTING IT NOW! ANYWAY, I'LL PROTECT HER!!!
HEY.

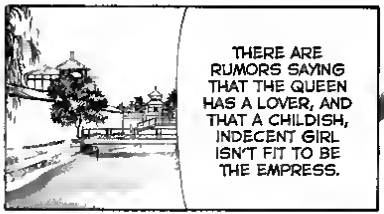
YOU'RE NOISY, BRAT.
THE FISH WILL SWIM AWAY.
.....
I APOLOGIZE, BUT. .
THIS IS THE PALACE'S POND. IS IT ALRIGHT FOR YOU TO BE FISHING HERE?
PLOP
IT'S FINE.
He must be nobility
The embroidery on his collar looks expensive

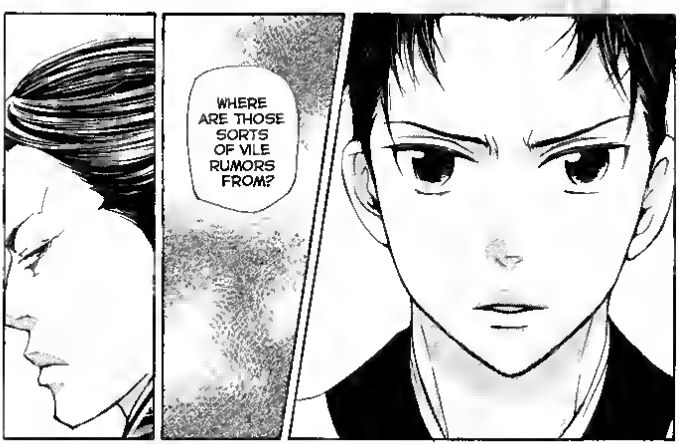
HEY BRAT, I'VE SEEN YOU BEFORE.
YOU CAME TO VISIT QUEEN KOU...
YES, MY NAME IS SEIGAI.
AH...
ARE YOU THE QUEEN'S LOVER?
WHAT?!
ACK!
splash
PLIP
SHOCK
THE FISH GOT AWAY!
ANGRY
WHO CARES ABOUT THAT! WHAT DID YOU SAY JUST THEN?!
WHO ARE YOU?



"T/N: A REFERENCE TO A JAPANESE FILM CALLED TSURIBAKA NISSHI 6


BECAUSE FISH DON'T SAY ANY-THING.
This guy is strange.
OF COURSE THEY DON'T.


THERE ARE RUMORS SAYING THAT THE QUEEN HAS A LOVER, AND THAT A CHILDISH, INDECENT GIRL ISN'T FIT TO BE THE EMPRESS.


WHERE ARE THOSE SORTS OF VILE RUMORS FROM?

FISHING IS NICE.

SHE LEFT HER HOMELAND AND CAME TO THIS WESTERN COUNTRY WITHOUT THINKING ABOUT HERSELF...
THAT'S STUPID! I KNOW BEST OF ALL HOW HONORABLE QUEEN KOU IS!
YOU'RE WRONG.
EVEN THOUGH THERE'S NO ONE MORE SUITED TO BECOMING THE EMPRESS THAN THAT BEAUTIFUL AND NOBLE PERSON!
IT MUST HAVE COME FROM ANOTHER WOMAN WHO SHAMELESSLY WANTED TO BE THE EMPRESS!
TO THOSE AT THE TOP, AS LONG AS THE COUNTRY IS PROSPEROUS, THAT'S ENOUGH. THAT IS AN IDEAL COUNTRY.
TO BOTH THE EMPRESS AND THE EMPEROR, ANYONE IS FINE.
TO QUEEN KOU, ANYONE'S FINE.

HER ONLY PURPOSE IS TO HAVE CHILDREN.
GRIP
HOW DIS-GUST-ING.
THE PEACE BETWEEN AH AND KOU IS BEING KEPT WITH HER TEARS!!!
THAT'S 'AN IDEAL COUNTRY'?!

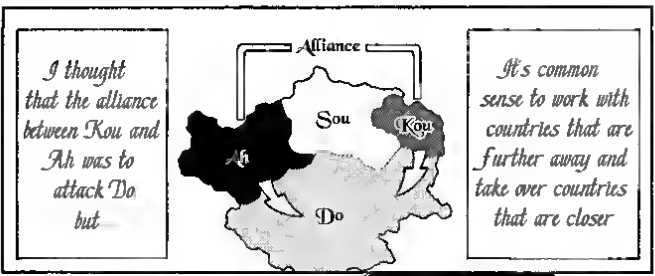
YOU CAN'T CALL THAT SORT OF REALITY 'IDEAL'.
TURN
BUT AS LONG AS QUEEN KOU IS THE EMPRESS, I'LL PROTECT HER!
IN 50 OR 100 YEARS THE STUPID EMPEROR AND THE STUPID EMPRESS CAN GO AND DIE!
'IDEAL' IS AFTER ALL AN IDEAL...
HE SAYS SOME PRETTY SHARP THINGS, THAT BRAT.
PLOP

BUT NOT QUITE.
YOU'RE TOO YOUNG TO LIVE IN THIS PA-LACE.
PRINCESS
I HAVE SOME THINGS I WOULD LIKE TO DISCUSS WITH YOU, SO MAY WE TALK PRIVATELY
Whispe
YOU LOVE YOUR MASTER TOO MUCH.

I GUESS THE RUMORS WERE TRUE...
MY, HE WANTS TO BE ALONE WITH HER SO QUICKLY!
STOP THAT! FOR THE EMPRESS TO HAVE THAT SORT OF RELATIONSHIP WITH A CHILD...
DAMMIT, WHAT WAS THAT?
THAT COLOR BANNER...
WHISPER
OH, THAT'S QUEEN KOU'S... YOU KNOW.
OH MY.
YOU'RE NOISY, OLD MAN!
If it's to protect her, I'll do anything in my power,
but I can't stop rumors

THIS IS NOT GOOD. DO WAS AIMING FOR THE POSITION OF AH'S EMPRESS TOO!!!
A PROCESSION FROM DO!!!

IT WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER IF A LOWER-RANKED WOMAN WERE GOING TO BE A CONCUBINE. THIS WILL BRING WAR.
FOR TWO COUNTRIES' PRINCESSES TO ENTER ANOTHER COUNTRY'S ROYAL FAMILY
IT CAN'T HAPPEN!
DO'S PRINCESS WILL BECOME AH'S EMPRESS...


I thought that the alliance between Kou and Ah was to attack Do but...
Alliance
Sou
Kou
Ah
Do
It's common sense to work with countries that are further away and take over countries that are closer

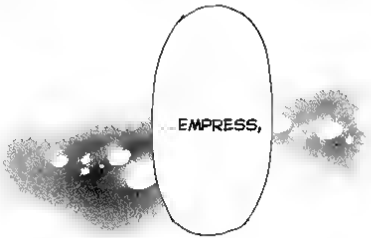
HOW DO I PROTECT THE PRINCESS?!
SEIGAI.
WILL THAT GREEDY ROYAL FAMILY OF DO REALLY BE SATISFIED WITH ONLY THE POSITION OF SECOND EMPRESS?
THIS IS COMPLETELY OUTSIDE MY PREDICTIONS!

SEIGAI, PLEASE RETURN TO KOU.
I CALLED YOU HERE TODAY TO TELL YOU THAT.
AN ERRAND CAME FOR YOU FROM SEIITSU.
HE WANTS YOU TO RETURN AND PROTECT KOU WITH HIM.
!
THIS CAN'T BE, THIS...
IS THIS BECAUSE OF THOSE STUPID RUMORS?!
EVEN THOUGH WE'VE GOT NOTHING TO BE ASHAMED OF!!!
I WON'T LEAVE YOU IN THIS DANGEROUS PALACE, PRINCESS!!!

YOU'RE A BURDEN.
I'M NOT A PRINCESS.
I AM AH'S EMPRESS.
YOU'RE NOT HERE AS PART OF AN OFFICIAL KOU ENVOY, SO YOU CAN'T EVEN STAY IN THIS PALACE WITHOUT MY PERMISSION.
GO HOME.

Uhuh!
Aaah!
ARE THEY YOUR TRUE FEELINGS?
Ah!
I HAVE GIVEN YOU NOTHING BUT TROUBLE...
WITHOUT EVEN BEING USEFUL... SELFISHLY.
BUT WHEN WE WERE IN KOU, TO HELP YOU, I VOWED...
PRINCESS.
THAT I WOULD ALWAYS STAY BY YOUR SIDE,

I DON'T NEED YOU TO.


EMPRESS,

IT SEEMS WE MUST PART...
I BID YOU FARE-WELL
Not long after I left Ah
Emperor Ah married his second wife
To Be Continued...

CLOP
Pant
I.
I heard that the beautiful and proud princess of the great country, Do, had pushed the official Empress aside but...
CLOP
OH, YOU'RE BACK.
Seiitsu
I didn't once think of returning
3 years later -
Near the borders of Kou

THE ARMY OF DO HAS RETREATED FROM THE VILLAGE ON THE BORDER!
IT'S AN ENEMY'S SWORD.
CLIP
THUD
CLOP
IT'S A SOUVENIR, BROTHER.
AH!
ALL 50 OF MY MEN ARE FINE.
CLOP
LET'S CELEBRATE PROTECTING THE COUNTRY TONIGHT!!!
YEAH!!!
AAAARRR
ROOO

At the border between Ah and Kou.
As usual skirmishes were always happening
but I didn't hate that
AT ANY RATE,
AS LONG AS IT'S NOT ALL OUT WAR, WE CAN FIGHT THE DO ARMY.
WE CAN ONLY DO WHAT WE'RE ABLE TO.
YOU'VE DONE VERY WELL, SEIGAI.
...YES.

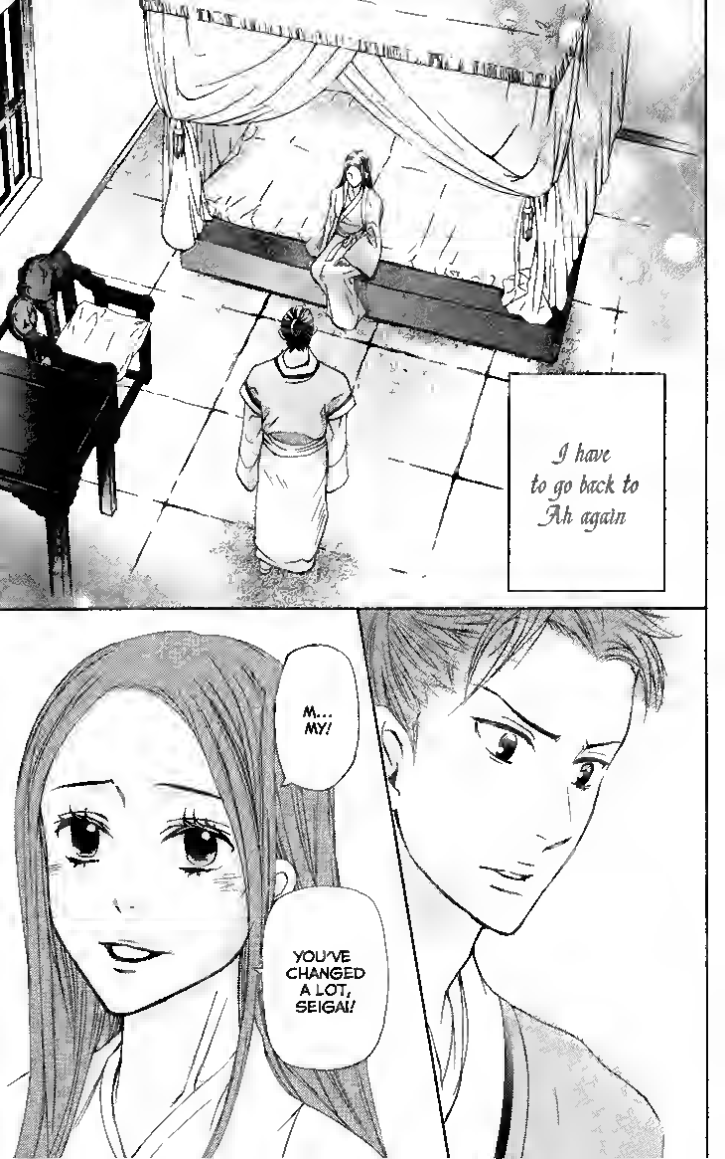
Tch
Sugh
AND YOU DIDN'T DO ANYTHING.
WH... WHA?!
I DID DO SOMETHING. I STAYED HERE (AND PROTECTED THE CASTLE), DIDN'T I?
Sob
Sob
LOOK! A LETTER FROM KOU PALACE ARRIVED TO CONGRATULATE YOU!
I AM ONLY AN OFFICIAL MOST OF THE TIME.
LIAR, YOUR SWORD ARM IS...
OH, RIGHT.
I DIDN'T EVEN SAY ANYTHING.
ARE YOU STILL ANGRY THAT I CALLED YOU BACK FROM AH?! THAT WAS THE ONLY THING I COULD DO!
YOU DID SAY IT! SILENCE IS THE WORST THING THAT YOU CAN SAY!!!

ACCORDING TO THIS LETTER, I'VE BEEN FREED FROM MY DUTY TO PROTECT THE BORDER.
THIS TIME, I'M GOING TO AH AS KOU'S ENVOY.
It's a promotion
WILL YOU COME TOO?
SOMEONE WHO KNOWS A LOT ABOUT AH WOULD BE USEFUL.
N-NO.
I'LL JUST BE A NUISANCE TO QUEEN KOU...

I might have been a problem to her
Is that true? Did I really have no feelings for her except for thinking of her as my master?
3 YEARS AGO THERE WASN'T MUCH CHOICE. WHAT COULD YOU DO ON YOUR OWN?
THAT GROUND-LESS RUMOR HAS DIS-APPEARED.
GROUND-LESS, HUH...
?
QUEEN KOU SENT THIS. IT WAS WRAPPED AROUND THE JADE RING AH SENT AC-CEPTING ME AS KOU'S ENVOY.
ISN'T THERE SOME-THING ON THE COR-NER?
SLIDE
WELL, I WON'T FORCE YOU.
ANYWAY, AH SEEMS TO FIND DO MORE IMPOR-TANT THAN US RECENTLY.

A/N: THE JADE RING ISN'T ACTUALLY A RING. IT'S A CIRCLE MADE FROM JADE THAT MEN WOULD HANG ONTO THEIR BELTS

DO YOU KNOW WHAT IT IS? IT HASN'T GOT QUEEN KOU'S MARK...
I WONDER IF IT'S JUST A DOODLE.
AH!!!
If it's what I think it is, I have to go
I know what it is


I have to go back to Ah again
M... MY!
YOU'VE CHANGED A LOT, SEIGAI!

EMP...
This person who was called a flower doesn't even have the ability to put her hair up anymore
and there are no maids
An illness isn't enough reason to shut you in this dark room
She's thin

YOU'VE BECOME GOOD AT FLATTERY TOO, SEIGAI...
You're the one who has changed
EMPRESS, YOUR BEAUTY HAS NOT CHANGED...

I cant stop my tears..
FOR-GIVE ME...
I MIGHT HAVE AC-TUALLY BEEN ANGRY WITH YOU ALL THIS TIME.
I...
BE-CAUSE YOU'RE SO HON-ORABLE,
THINKING IT WAS BEST FOR BOTH OF US, YOU DIDN'T HESITATE TO PUSH ME AWAY.
HOWEVER HARD IT WAS, YOU CHOSE TO BECOME THE EMPRESS OF AH.

I LOVED YOU WHEN YOU WERE JUST THE GIRL WHO LAUGHED AND CRIED IN FRONT OF ME.
BUT...
I LOVED THE PRINCESS I PROMISED TO RUN AWAY WITH.
THAT BAD DRAWING WE DID TOGETHER WHEN WE WERE YOUNG.
WHEN YOU CRIED AND SAID YOU DIDN'T WANT TO GO TO AH.

LIFT
I WAITED AND WAITED. EVEN THOUGH I DISTRACTED MYSELF BY FINISHING THE DRAWING WE STARTED, YOU DIDN'T COME.
WHEN WE PROMISED, I WAITED ALL NIGHT.
UNFOLD
IT'S STILL REALLY BAD, ISN'T IT?
UNTIL I SAW THE DRAWING ON THIS CLOTH...
AND WAS NOWHERE TO BE FOUND.
I THOUGHT THAT THE PRINCESS I LOVED HAD ALREADY DIED INSIDE OF YOU,

YOU ACTUALLY CAME, JUST LIKE WE'D PROMISED.
THAT'S THE ONLY WAY YOU COULD HAVE DRAWN WHAT I DREW THEN!
I DON'T KNOW WHETHER IT WAS AFTER I'D LEFT, OR IF YOU WERE WATCHING FROM THE SHADOWS, BUT ..
YES...
I KNEW I COULDN'T RUN FROM MY POSITION OR THAT SITUATION...
BUT IF I'D LEFT WITH YOU THEN, SEIGAI,
RIGHT NOW WE'D BE ON OUR JOURNEY, LAUGHING TOGETHER.
ON A ROAD WITH THE WIND SCATTERING FLOWER PETALS, AND BIRDS FLYING AROUND US.

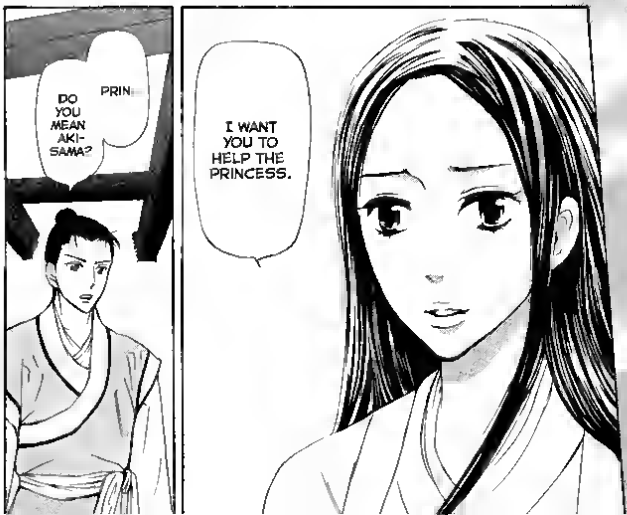
WHEN I THINK OF THAT,
JUST WITH THAT I CAN BE HAPPY.
I THOUGHT IT WOULD NEVER HAPPEN.
I THOUGHT YOU HAD BETRAYED ME.
CAW!

BUT YOU WERE JUST HIDING INSIDE THE "EMPRESS".
AND YOU'VE BEEN THERE THE ENTIRE TIME, HAVEN'T YOU...
PRIN-CESS...
PLEASE TELL ME YOU WANT TO RUN AWAY.
THAT'S ALL YOU NEED TO SAY.
WITH JUST THAT, I'LL BECOME YOUR HANDS, YOUR FEET, AND YOUR WINGS.

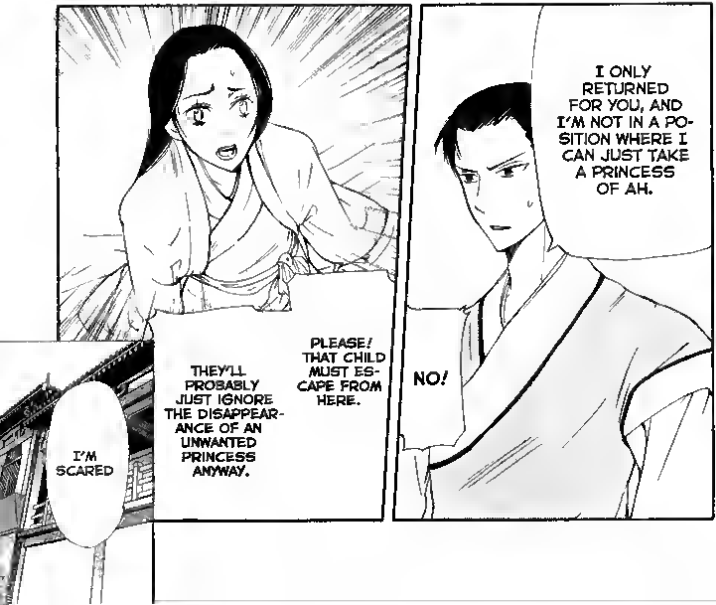
I'LL NEVER LEAVE YOUR SIDE!
MY PRIN-CESS...

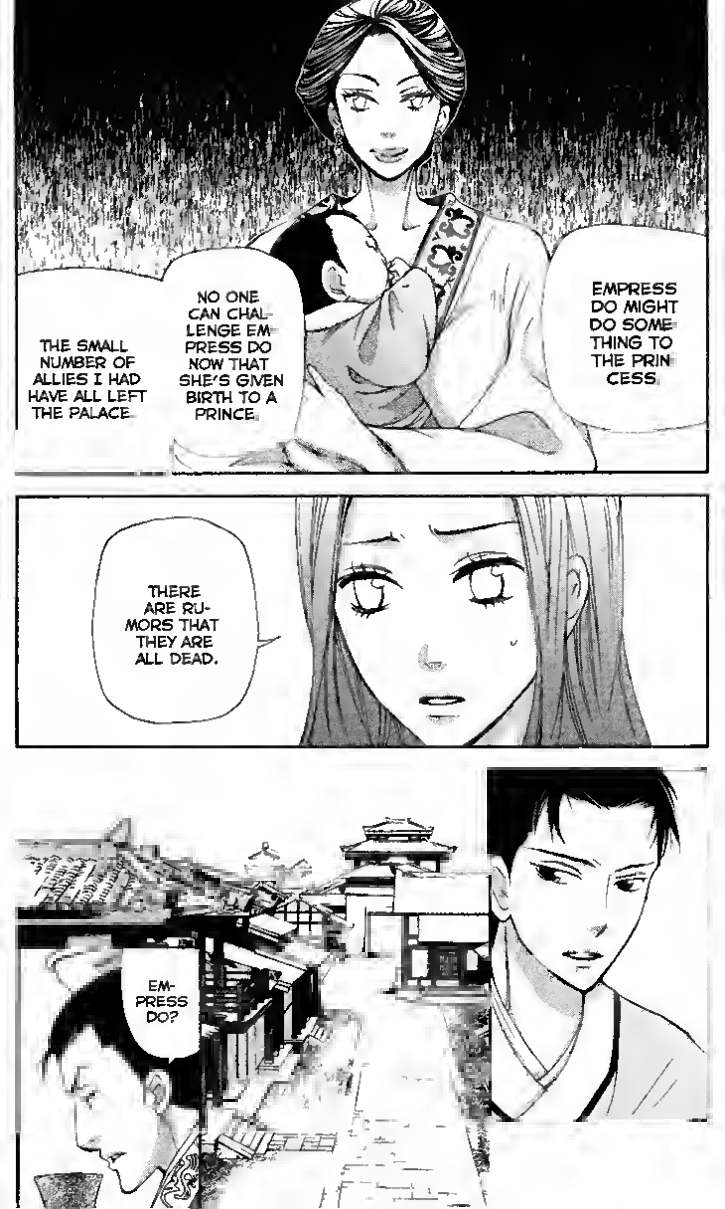
I WONDERED IF YOU WOULD REMEMBER THAT DRAWING, SEIGAI.
EVEN THOUGH I HAVE NO RIGHT TO ASK, MY PRAYERS HAVE BEEN ANSWERED...
THANK YOU.

BUT HOW COULD A NUISANCE LIKE ME LEAVE THIS PLACE?
WHAT?!
IT'S NOT FOR ME.


I WANT YOU TO HELP THE PRINCESS.
PRIN-
DO YOU MEAN AKI-SAMA?

THAT DROOLING LITTLE KID WHO WOULD PUT FOOD IN HER MOUTH AND THEN TAKE IT BACK OUT AGAIN?
SHE DOESN'T DROOL ANY-MORE.
I WON-DER IF HE DOESN'T LIKE KIDS
I REFUSE.


I ONLY RETURNED FOR YOU, AND I'M NOT IN A PO-SITION WHERE I CAN JUST TAKE A PRINCESS OF AH.
NO!
PLEASE! THAT CHILD MUST ES-CAPE FROM HERE.
THEY'LL PROBABLY JUST IGNORE THE DISAPPEAR-ANCE OF AN UNWANTED PRINCESS ANYWAY.
I'M SCARED


EMPRESS DO MIGHT DO SOMETHING TO THE PRINCESS.
NO ONE CAN CHALLENGE EMPRESS DO NOW THAT SHE'S GIVEN BIRTH TO A PRINCE.
THE SMALL NUMBER OF ALLIES I HAD HAVE ALL LEFT THE PALACE.
THERE ARE RUMORS THAT THEY ARE ALL DEAD.
EMPRESS DO?

SHE'S CERTAINLY BEAUTIFUL, BUT...
THAT WAS WHILE YOU WERE MEETING QUEEN KOU.
DURING THE AUDIENCE WITH EMPEROR AH, EVEN THOUGH SHE'S NOT HIS OFFICIAL WIFE, SHE WAS AT THE EMPEROR'S SIDE INSTEAD, LOOKING MENACING.
YOU CAN'T SAY SHE HAS A NICE SMILE...
Hohoho
NO...
DO YOU THINK EMPEROR AH WILL FORGET ABOUT QUEEN KOU AND MAKE EMPRESS DO HIS OFFICIAL WIFE?
IT SEEMS QUEEN KOU'S SITUATION IS WORSE THAN SHE THOUGHT IT WAS.
PUT

TO COOPERATE WITH A BIG COUNTRY LIKE DO EQUALLY, THE POSITION OF AH'S EMPRESS CAN'T SEEM LIKE SOMETHING THAT IS EASY TO GET.
SOMETHING THAT IS BEING FOUGHT OVER HAS MORE VALUE.
HE'S GOOD AT TRADING
HE'S THIS COUNTRY'S EMPEROR
HEY!
She's the one that the greedy Empress Do will sacrifice
BUT...

DON'T THINK ABOUT DOING ANYTHING STUPID.
I WANT TO BECOME QUEEN KOU'S STRENGTH TOO, BUT THAT'S NO REASON TO RISK STARTING A WAR BETWEEN KOU, AH, AND DO.
THE COUNTRY AND QUEEN KOU ARE IMPORTANT.
BUT TO ME,
YOU'RE IMPORTANT TOO.
...
I KNOW.
I knew ...

That running away with her would be betraying my brother and my country.
IT'S ALL BEEN TAKEN CARE OF.
LET'S GO.

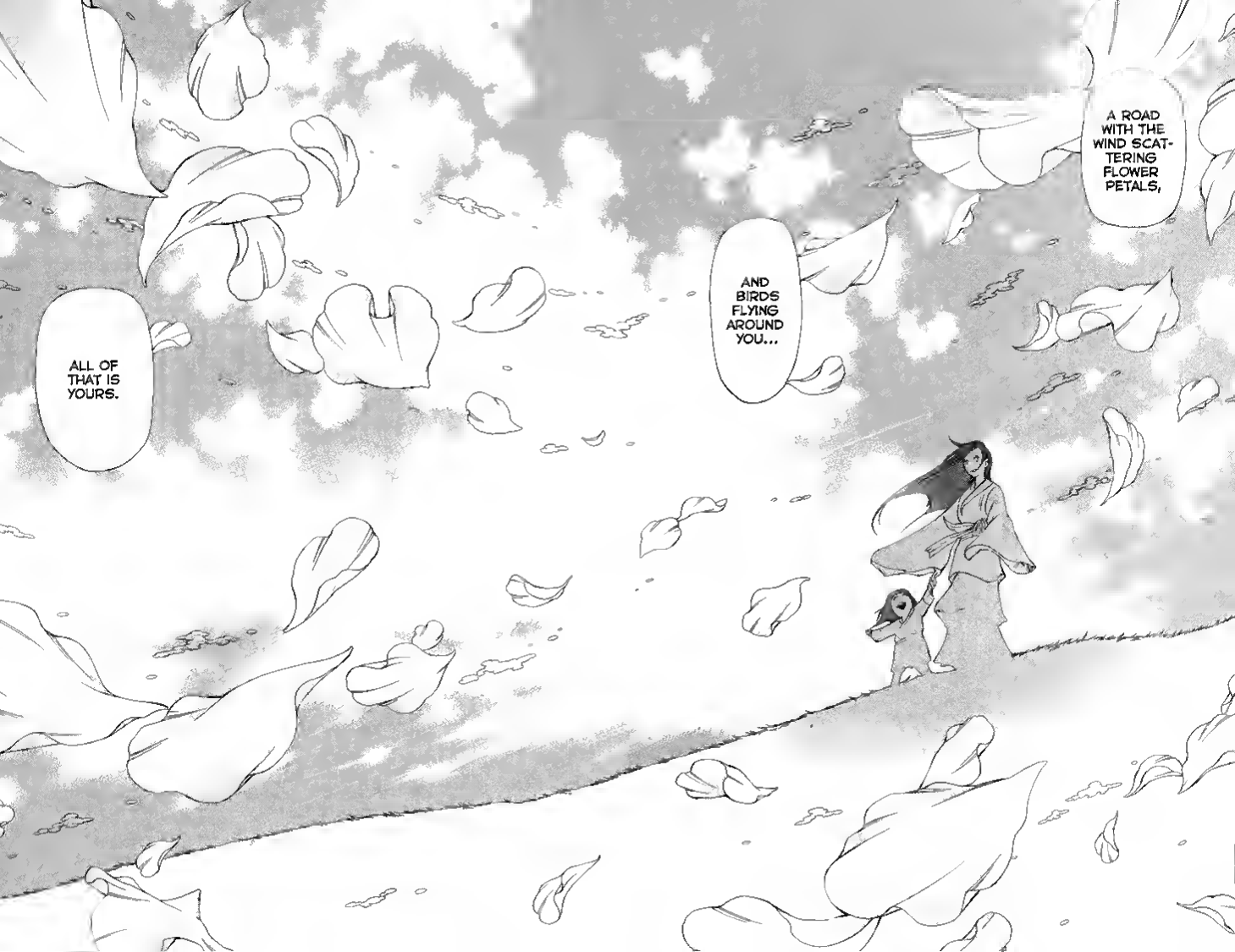
SHE'S GROWN UP.
I CAUGHT A GLIMPSE OF HER.
THE PRIN-CESS?
I PAID A MAID. SHE SHOULD HAVE ALREADY TAKEN HER OUTSIDE THE PALACE.
I CAN CARRY THAT BURDEN.
BUT WON'T I BE A BUR-DEN TO YOU LIKE THIS...
THANK YOU...
GREAK
COME!
THIS IS WHAT WE WANTED.

SLA
SH

BRO...
TH...
ER...
BR...
SEIGA!
YOU IDIOT!

STOP!
PLEASE, STOP IT.
QUEEN KOU.
PLEASE STEP AWAY FROM THAT MAN.
THE EMPEROR OF AH STILL HASN'T FOUND OUT YET.
BUT THERE'S NO WAY THE EMPRESS CAN RUN FROM THE COUNTRY WITHOUT ANYONE NOTICING.
PRINCESS.
LISTEN... TO ME.

IF I AM CAPTURED HERE, A GUARD SHOULD COME TO SEE YOU...
DO WHAT HE SAYS...
HE'S THE ONE I HIRED TO RUN AWAY WITH YOU IF SOMETHING WENT WRONG...
IF YOU'RE CAREFUL, HE SHOULD TAKE YOU TO WHERE PRINCESS AKI IS...
PLEASE RUN AWAY TOGETHER
I PREPARED PROPERLY THIS TIME
BECAUSE THIS IS THE SECOND TIME WE'VE PLANNED TO RUN AWAY,


A ROAD WITH THE WIND SCATTERING FLOWER PETALS,
AND BIRDS FLYING AROUND YOU...
ALL OF THAT IS YOURS.

"I love you."
I APOLOGIZE.
IT SEEMS THAT THIS IS AS FAR AS I CAN GO WITH YOU...
That is something...
I'll never say to you
Fall
NO!!!

NO...
THERE'S NO WAY I'D WANT...
TO EXCHANGE THE PRINCESS'S SAFETY FOR YOURS.
Surely
She's too kind to become the Empress
And she's too noble to be an ordinary girl.
SEIITSU.
YES.

NO!
IN EXCHANGE, I VOW TO NEVER TRY TO RUN FROM MY POSITION AS EMPRESS EVER AGAIN.
STAND
QUICKLY ATTEND TO SEIGAI'S WOUND. I WON'T ALLOW YOU TO CAPTURE HIM AS A CRIMINAL.
I AM NOT UNHAPPY. I HAVE THE COVETED POSITION OF EMPRESS.
THANKS TO YOU, I WAS SO HAPPY THAT I THOUGHT I DIDN'T NEED ANYTHING ELSE.
GOODBYE, SEIGAI.

Goodbye, goodbye... until the day we meet again.
I didn't know then that was the last time I'd ever see you.

SHOCK
No way.
It's finished like that?!
Without dealing with the situation between us two...
It'll continue in the next volume.

女王の花③

ベツコミフラワーコミックス

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